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UNIVERSITY University of Alberta

DEGREE FOR WHICH THESIS WAS PRESENTED Ph.D

YEAR THIS DEGREE GRANTED 1976

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FIJI - A CASE STUDY IN SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION

by

© JAY NARAYAN

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

IN

SOCIOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

FALL, 1976

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled Fiji - A case study in Social, Economic, and Political Transformation submitted by Jay Narayan in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology.

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Dedication

To My Mother

- whose notion of fairness and constant
interest in my education over the years
will always be cherished.

Abstract

For some decades now it has been a major theoretical contention among conventional Western social scientists that the basic socio-economic and political problems currently faced by the now emergent nations are very much of their own making and therefore they have little to do with the past and the present practices of the presently advanced nations. This thesis seeks to demonstrate that such an assertion is scarcely tenable; on the contrary, and like those of other emergent nations, Fiji's present is very much the making of her past colonial history - a history that not only destroyed the very connerstones of Fiji's indigenous socio-economic and political structure but, in the process, also helped to transform it into a subordinate capitalist structure and as a satellite of the capitalist metropolis. In this sense, therefore, the thesis is essentially a study of the political economy of Fiji since 1800.

More specifically, the thesis shows that Fiji's socio-economic and political problems are now deep-rooted in two inter-related but separate sources, one internal and the other external. The internal uneven development and inequality, for instance, are an inherent part of the capitalist structure and the capitalist productive and distributive processes which characterize Fiji. Such a structure, however, is continuously and increasingly reinforced by the nature of Fiji's external socio-economic and political relations. In particular, Fiji's increasing participation and dependence on the world economy has brought about a corresponding increase in political and economic dominance by that world at the internal level. The study shows that, taken together, Fiji is caught between the evils of continued uneven development from within and underdevelopment from without - a situation which owes its origin and development to the internationalization of capitalism, i.e. through imperialism, colonialism, and neo-colonialism.

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my sincere thanks to the members of my thesis committee: Dr. A.K. Davis, Dr. A.S.A. Mohsen, and Dr. R.A. Sydie, all of the Department of Sociology, and Dr. D. Bai of the Department of Anthropology, University of Alberta. Special thanks are extended to Professor Arthur K. Davis, my Supervisor and the Chairman of the thesis committee, whose tireless effort and friendly guidance throughout the thesis project were most invaluable and very much appreciated.

My thanks also go to the Government of Canada, and especially to the Canadian Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Administration, under whose auspices I have studied in Canada for both my Masters and Doctorate degrees; their generous financial assistance is gratefully acknowledged. And I also wish to thank the Government of Fiji for sponsoring me to study in Canada.

Numerous Fiji Islanders have been helpful to me in various ways during my fieldwork there; it would not be appropriate to list all the names here. These include Mrs. Lila Patel, the wife of the late Mr. A.D. Patel, the first Leader of Opposition and the founder and architect of the National Federation Party and the Independence movement in Fiji, and Mrs. Irene Narayan, Member of Fiji's House of Representatives. More specifically, I wish to express my most sincere thanks to Mr. Hari Bhagat and Mrs. Shakuntala Hari Bhagat of Nadi for their kindness, assistance, and the interest they have shown in my thesis work.

To my wife, Suman, I owe a great deal, both for the typing of

the thesis in all its stages and for her unabating affection, kindness, patience and tolerance throughout the entire PhD Programme. And I also owe much to our children, Ajesh, Vasantika, and Sandhya, for denying them for a while a more congenial atmosphere - and, perhaps, a better environment. It was really a team-effort that brought this thesis to completion.

Author

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Chapter One

Problem Theory and Methodology

I Introduction:

The descrepancy that presently exists in the Western social sciences between theory and practice is perhaps nowhere so obvious as in the social scientists' efforts to understand the socio-economic and political problems of emergent nations. Academic social scientists, especially in North America, too often proceed on the assumption that each metropolis/satellite society is responsible for its own level of socio-economic well-being. Even when dealing with such concrete aspects as international trade, for instance, the tendency is to treat each country as a corporate entity untainted by external influences. As if such a departure from actuality is not remote enough, they proceed to study and analyse the satellite societies within such frameworks as 'dual economy', 'plural society', 'traditionalism and modernity' and the like, thereby largely ignoring the historical processes and events that made these societies what they are to-day.

The present study is an attempt to diagnose the current socio-economic malaise in Fiji by delineating the processes that have caused it. Despite its somewhat higher per capita income relative to many other 'third world' countries and the expected boom in its sugar industry, the country has hitherto functioned in a state of economic setbacks, widespread unemployment and poverty, financial dependence, and all the consequences that these entail. And although the economy is essentially a mono-economy geared to export-oriented agriculture, the greater part of the land - though by no means the best - is controlled by uninvolved landowners and thus remains largely unused.

Yet idle land, idle labour, low wages, low productivity, rising imports over exports, rising prices, and all the social and political ills that these generate are certainly not the state of affairs with which people like to live. But people must live, even if it is for some just a matter of survival. In this sense, the present study is also about how people live, and how they react to a set of oppressive conditions, even if such conditions are not of their own making and over which they have no control.

To show how these oppressive conditions have come about and how they persist over time, are perhaps two of the major objectives of this thesis. Such a task, however, calls for a theoretical framework which allows research to be more consonant with the demands of analysis. In other words, it should not only enable us to relate the processes and events internal to the satellite society with those occurring at wider, external levels, but also at the same time to describe and explain the nature, the direction, the intensity, and the consequences of such relationships over time and in historical reference. It is precisely for these reasons and in our present context that theories of imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism become most relevant and are therefore utilized in the present study.

In general, there are two aspects to the problem under study. The first, which is historically specific and concrete, is concerned with the process of production, distribution and exchange and the consequent class formation, class consciousness and class conflict in Fiji. The second, which is general and theoretical and of which the first is but a particular case, is concerned with the nature and the future of imperialism in emergent nations.

The notion of conflict is central to this approach to the study of social change and, therefore, in this context it should be noted that, while generally implicit, the dialectical method of explanation is utilized throughout the present study.[1] It refers to two levels of conflict that generate change in the context of the colonial and, later, neo-colonial structure of Fiji's economy and society.

The two levels of conflict that I believe continuously help transform Fiji's economy and society can be characterized as follows: (a) the conflict that arises between the internal factors, i.e. between the local bourgeoisie and the local proletariat due to the nature of their relationship to the means of production and their consequent position in the productive process, and (b) the conflict that arises between the internal and the external factors, i.e. between the subject masses, including the local bourgeoisie, and the foreign owners and controllers of the means of production, distribution and exchange, as well as the nature of Fiji's dependence on the international market. The first type of conflict is essentially of a class nature and the second, which is seen as the outcome of the exploitative relationship between the internal and the external factors, is of the type that gave rise to nationalism in the colonial period.

II Theoretical Framework

Imperialism has been a persistent phenomenon for some centuries now. Yet, despite its long history and coercive consequences upon many societies, there is little agreement among scholars on the Left (Cox, 1964; Hobsbawm, 1964; Dobb, 1968; Sweezy, 1968; Frank, 1970) as to whether the colonial and post-colonial societies are still essentially feudal in character, or whether they have been transformed to the capitalist pattern as a result of their continued exposure to imperialism.

This debate on the transformation or non-transformation from feudalism to capitalism raises several issues which are of interest to us in our present context. In general, those who take the view that the satellite societies are still essentially feudal in character tend to emphasize the internal causes of change. They attribute these changes largely to conflicts which, in their view, are increasingly brought about, among other things, by the inability of a progressively inefficient feudal mode of production to satisfy, on the one hand, the need of a growing population and, on the other, the need of the feudal rulers to appropriate more and more of the surplus for themselves. Thus, while these scholars (Norman, 1940; Mao, 1967; Dobb, 1968; Laclau, 1971) admit the significance of international trade and the world market system, they do not regard these external factors and the influences that these might exert as crucial for an understanding of the changes occurring internally. Instead they attribute these changes to reactions or conflicts inherent in the internal processes, such as the essentially feudal relations and the basically feudal mode of production, distribution, and exchange.

In contrast, those who take the view that the satellite societies are essentially capitalist in character tend to stress the external factors as crucial for changes that occur internally. Indeed, these scholars (Polyani, 1967; Sweezy, 1968; Frank, 1967; Dalton, 1971) argue, for instance, that in these societies the breakdown of the feudal mode of production itself occurred as a result of the metropolis/satellite trade relationship which became established through the institution of imperialism and colonialism. In particular they point out that the replacement of the production for use value, an important feature of the feudal and earlier societies, by the production for exchange value, a characteristic peculiar to the capitalist societies, is in itself a sufficient indicator of the extent of capitalist penetration of these societies, and therefore the view that these societies are basically feudal in character is no longer relevant.

It is not our intention here to engage in an extended discussion of this debate, but rather to point out that these differing emphases on the transformation from one type of society to another reflect the common misconception among Marxists and non-Marxists alike about the Marxian notion of the relationship between theory and practice. That this misconception about the relationship between theory and practice might further blind some from seeing, on the one hand, the relationship between the theories of capitalism, imperialism, and colonialism and, on the other, the relationship between these and the actual impact that their historical operation has had upon the colonized societies, is not inconceivable. However, the discussion that follows is only partly an attempt to transcend this debate; it is basically intended to provide us with a theoretical framework which can suitably guide our present case study.

(a) The Marxian Notion of Theory and Practice

Under the present writer's approach, Marxism is seen, in its original context, as a theory with scientific calims (scientific socialism), predicting future social, economic, and political developments. The normal scientific procedure is to keep open the possibility of a theory being wrong, and in this sense all scientific theories have a hypothetical character, subject to revision in the light of evidence. Therefore, if we accept Marxism as a science, and this is a basic position of the present study, then we expect Marxism to maintain contact with historical reality. The theoretical modifications required, therefore, could take different forms, and they represent a continuous process in which the theory encounters changes which it failed to anticipate, and then tries to adjust itself to such changes.

Seen from this angle, the problem of change becomes central to and inherent in Marxism itself. But "Marxian Marxism",[2] as a scientific theory originating in and developing within history, has inherent in itself not only the notion of social change and development, but also the notion that it should change as human conditions change. That this is the case can be illustrated by an example drawn directly from Marxian Marxism.

The experience of 20 years between the appearance of the Manifesto and the failure of the Paris Commune, had demonstrated to both Marx and Engels that in some respects the principles laid down in 1848 had to be amended and revised. In 1872, therefore, when they jointly republished the Communist Manifesto, they remarked in the preface to the German edition that while its principles were on the whole as correct as before, nevertheless

> " the practical application of the principles will depend, as the Manifesto itself states, everywhere and at all times, on the historical conditions for the time being existing." (Marx and Engles, 1968)

The above statement makes it amply clear in simple terms that Marxism is not only a theory with scientific claims, but that it must continually develop to adapt itself to inevitable and inexorable change. And I believe that it is precisely because of a lack of sufficient insight into this notion that some Marxist scholars still cling to the view that the presently underdeveloped countries have been and still are essentially feudal in character, despite the drastically changed conditions in which these countries find themselves to-day.

(b) Capitalism, Imperialism and Colonialism

Despite an important earlier work (Hobson, 1902), Lenin's theory of imperialism can be regarded as a major first step in our understanding of the theoretical relationships between capitalism and colonialism/neo-colonialism. While analytically separable, these three concepts are closely interrelated, with the notion of imperialism providing the necessary linkages between the other two. It is in the changing nature of capitalism, in its need for expansion and consolidation, that the concepts of imperialism and colonialism become meaningful. But it is the notion of imperialism and the nature of its relationship with capitalism that generally hampers our understanding of the problems of the satellite societies.

Imperialism has been popularly described as an extension of capitalism across national boundaries. Lenin called it "the highest stage of capitalism" (Lenin, 1939). For him, therefore, imperialism is not only the brain-child of capitalism but its hand-maid as well; the satellites it creates must necessarily become its economic hinterlands, i.e. structurally fashioned on the capitalist pattern, and subordinate in socio-economic and political status (Davis, 1971).

To be sure, short-term imperialism as well as that of the Roman variety, which have as their economic basis direct forms of exploitation in tribute and plunder, would not necessitate the restructuring of the satellite society. But the smooth and long-term operation of imperialism originating from capitalism would make it necessary, indeed imperative, to transform the very fabric of the satellite society to the capitalist pattern. It is this role of imperialism which contributes to what has often been described as "the internationalization of capitalism" (Edwards et el, 1972) - a process whereby all characteristics of the capitalist system are compounded into a single world capitalist system (Baran and Sweezy, 1968).

Seen in this way, the satellite society is no less than a subordinate complement of its metropolitan counterpart. And unlike the metropolitan capitalist society wherein one class exploits another, imperialism must additionally and inevitably permit the exploitation of satellites by metropolis, thus developing the latter to the detriment of the former.

There are, therefore, two distinct aspects to the notion of imperialism, one internal and the other external. The internal aspect is basically concerned with the creation of conditions which would permit the maximum return from the internal activities, i.e. by way of surplus. In our view, however, and inefficient feudal mode of production, which is often given as a major cause of changes occurring internally, would not be conducive for the appropriation of such surplus as has been continuously transferred to the metropolis. On this account alone, we can conclude that the introduction of a more efficient mode of production, i.e. the capitalist mode of production, would become imperative. But it is needless to say that this would not be possible without some form of direct or indirect rule. Hence, the emergence of colonialism or semi-colonialism as a prerequisite for the transformation of the satellite society to the capitalist pattern.

The external aspect of imperialism, on the other hand, is basically concerned with the transfer from the satellite to the metropolis of the surpluses so appropriated at the internal level - less the "commissions" for the local compradors. This would necessarily require the development of an efficient system of exchange and trade relationship between the satellite and the metropolis. That such an exchange relationship would necessarily be unequal and in favour of the metropolis should be obvious.

It is on account of these two functions or aspects of imperialism, i.e. the creation and operation of an increasingly unequal exchange relationship and the conversion of the satellite society into an essentially capitalist structure - albeit subordinate sectors thereof - that we believe that the process of socio-economic differentiation both between the satellite society and the metropolis, and within the satellite society itself would set in. In other words, with capitalism from within amd imperialism from without, it would not be unreasonable to assume that the satellite society would increasingly but unavoidably become caught between two evils, that of uneven development from the inside and of underdevelopment from the outside.

I believe that this theoretical relationship between capitalism and underdevelopment is crucial for an understanding of the problems of emergent nations. And it is broadly within the context of this framework, which is essentially Marxist-Leninist in character, that I intend to examine and analyse the current socio-economic and political malaise in Fiji. It should be noted, however, that while we expect the general principles discussed above to hold for all emergent nations, the level and the intensity of the impact of imperialism would vary from one society to another, largely depending on the level of internal resistance to external pressures as well as both the internal and external historical and geographical conditions existing at the time. Thus, for instance, the absence of slavery from the Fiji scene can be accounted for partly by the abolition of the institution of slavery prior to the direct colonization of Fiji in 1874, and partly by the resistance to work for wages by Fiji's indigenous population, as well as the availability of an alternative supply of cheaper but more experienced labour.

III Objectives and Obstacles

Our stress in the present study on both the external as well as the internal forces as sources of conflict and change, calls for a few comments with particular reference to Fiji.

First, current literature on colonial and post-colonial societies has generally tended to emphasize either the internal or the external sources of conflict and change. This imbalance or oversight in emphasis has not only led to the misrepresentation of one crucial aspect at the expense of another, but it has necessarily led to a considerably distorted picture of the internal aspects. In the case of Fiji, for instance, the focus hitherto has been singularly on the internal aspects and, as to be expected, little to no attention has been paid to the institution of the capitalist mode of production, distribution, and exchange. Instead, the focus has been directed to the "residual" aspects of the indigenous society, with the consequent diagnosis that it is traditional and has a care-free way of life, which are at the root of its backwardness and, as such, they are obstacles to economic progress and development (Watters, 1969).

In contrast, the present study will not just stay content with the theoretical assumption that Fiji's economy and society have been for decades essentially capitalist in character, but it will also demonstrate the manner in which capitalism became actually established in Fiji. To be more specific, we will first characterize the pre-imperialist Fijian social structure, and in particular the indigenous mode of production, and then examine and assess the extent, the nature and the character of the main changes which occurred thereafter. In particular, we will assess the extent to which such changes involved a shift to the capitalist structural pattern, and especially to the following essential features of the capitalist mode of production:

In the capitalist mode of production the production process has the following pattern of operation:

(a) production is basically for exchange value;

(b) the economic surplus is subject to private appropriation by a few owners;

(c) ownership of the means of production is severed from ownership (but not control) of labour-power; hence the transformation of labour-power into a commodity and the advent of the wage-relation.

In this context, we will further show that the changing relations to the means of production which the establishment of capitalism brought about became the major source of conflict between classes with opposed interests in the process of production. This will be demonstrated with particular reference to two major industrial strikes which occurred in Fiji in the recent period, one in the industrial context (1959) and the other in the rural/agricultural context (1960).

Second, which follows from the first, the current literature generally tends to distinguish the internal from the external factors on the basis of foreign capital, foreign market and foreign government when discussing the colonial and the neo-colonial social structure (Ward, 1971). In other words, there is a tendency either to ignore the existence of the colonist altogether from the analysis,and to emphasize the existence of the local elite (Burns, 1960 and 1963), or to deny the existence of the local bourgeoisie and emphasize the benevolent role of the colonist in the developmental process. This will show that a local bourgeoisie did emerge alongside the colonist in Fiji and that its interests were often in conflict with those of the colonist. In other words, for the local bourgeoisie and the masses, while the colonist was bodily present in their society, his activities were usually congruent with the interests of the imperial country from which he came. This equally applies to the neo-colonist, in the form of investors, speculators, educators and experts, who are collectively an integral part of the external forces whose interests they serve and, therefore, they should be integrated within the notion of external forces. Our emphasis on the activities of this social category will be seen as particularly relevant in view of its crucial role in the process of underdevelopment of the emergent nations.

Third, in the current Western literature the concept of 'class' is almost invariably used as if it can be attributed only to wage-workers in an industrial society. Such a rigid notion of class does not facilitate its use for the analysis of the role of workers in emergent nations which are basically non-industrial, commodity-exporting agrarian economies, as opposed to manufacture-oriented industrial economies. Such differences must not,however, blind us from seeing the immense growth of the working class in both urban and rural areas, where they increasingly sell their labour as commodity in return for wages (Stavenhagen, 1975). It is, therefore, imperative that the notion of class must be conceived in its dynamic sense[3] if we are to capture and fully comprehend the changing nature of capitalism and imperialism in emergent nations. In this study I will show that the conditions for the process of socio-economic differentiation in Fiji had begun to emerge even as early as late last century, and that these conditions were conducive to the formation of classes in much the same sense as in industrial societies. Cuba in the 19th and 20th centuries offers a good example of this perspective.

Fourth, the notion of 'plural society' (Furnivall, 1948) in its original form emphasized the role of colonization in its creation. Yet, recent developments of the theory by some scholars (Smith, 1965; Kuper and Smith, 1969) have neglected this aspect and have concerned themselves on a static comparison between traditionally defined cultural and ethnic communities. In the event, one may well ask whether the maintenance of a traditional culture is so strong that such categories as 'tribe' or 'caste' or ethnic community have to be seen as more important units of analysis than classes? Many theorists noting the apparent prominance of ethnic-based conflicts in colonial societies would argue so. However, I believe that the forms which these ethnic groups take as well as the relationship between them have to be seen also in the context of class interest (Cox, 1959; Omvedt, 1973).

Moreover, I believe that the advent of the notion of 'plural society', at least in its more recent formulation, has helped to obscure, or at least to cloud, the issue of class formation, class consciousness, and class conflict in both the colonial and the neo-colonial structure. Such a perspective is necessarily unrealistic. It confuses the essence with the appearance and examines the latter to the neglect of the former (Cox, 1959). In this thesis I will show that the colonial division of labour arose out of convenience and expediency and that one of its most important but perhaps unintended functions has always been to distract attention from the colonial and, later, neo-colonial capitalists, thereby diverting the attention of the oppressed masses from the very factors underlying the apparent ethnic-based conflicts, i.e. from the exploitation of one class by another across cultural boundaries.

IV Chapter Outline

There are seven chapters to this thesis. Chapter Two will briefly introduce the reader to the general geographic and demographic aspects as well as to the nature and character of the socio-economic and political transformation of Fiji from about 1800 to 1874. Chapter Three will discuss the changing mode of production and the consequent changes in the relations to the means of production, distribution, and exchange over time, and up to the Second World War, with the specific purpose of identifying class formation, class consciousness and class conflicts. More specifically, it will examine the colonial land policy, the native policy, the colonial division of labour, the potentials for the emergence and the growth of the local bourgeoisie and the local proletariat, the labour contracts, and the nature of socio-economic relationship between the worker and the employer. In general, therefore, Chapters Two and Three attempt to provide the necessary historical background for our analysis of the post-war developmental trends in the chapters that follow.

Chapters Four, Five,and Six together form the main body of the thesis. Chapter Four, for instance, will discuss the major dynamics of internal inequality with specific reference to the nature of resource distribution in the post-war years. More particularly, it will deal with the disparities in land, education, occupation, and income distribution. A primary aim of this chapter will therefore be to show the extent to which Fiji's post-war economy and society is characterized by institutionalized disparities and differential access to resources between the urban and rural workers on the one hand, and the local bourgeoisie and the colonists on the other. Similarly, Chapter Five will examine the nature and character of Fiji's post-war dependence on the outside world and the manner in which such dependence become operative within Fiji. More specifically, it will examine the nature of the relationship between Fiji's increasing participation and dependence on the world economy and the growing dominance and control by that economy at the internal level. In other words, the internal and the external aspects of Fiji make up the totality within the context of which her basic socio-economic and political problems will be analysed.

Chapter Six will be concerned with a brief discussion of the increasing tnesions and conflicts which arise from Fiji's conversion as a capitalist satellite society in the post-war decades.

Chapter Seven is a concluding chapter. It will be concerned, on the one hand, with the future of capitalism and imperialism in Fiji and, on the other, with the future of capitalism and imperialism in emergent nations.

Footnotes and References

1. It should be especially noted that not all conflict theories are "dialetical", though all dialectics involve conflict. Moreover, there is much in dialectics which is absent in other conflict theories: change from oppositions, the "whole as a unity of opposites" (Lukacs, 1971; Mao, 1966). For as Marx put it, "What constitutes dialectical movement is the coexistence of two contradictory sides, their conflict and fusion into a new category" (Marx, 1963:112). It is therefore within this perspective that the present study is being carried out.

2. This phrase is specifically used to distinguish Marxism of Marx, Lenin and Mao Tse-Tung from Bernsteinian and Plekhanovian varieties which were rejected by Marx himself, "Je ne suis pas un marxiste" (Hook, 1933:3).

3. If theory is to be consonant with practice, key concepts such as 'class' must of necessity undergo revision in order to take into account the changed historical conditions. In other words, as it is used in this study, the concept of 'class' must also embrace workers in non-industrial/agrarian societies. It is, therefore, one's position in the productive process rather than one's position as a worker or an employer in an 'industrial setting' that should be the basis of class definition. This is what is meant when we refer to the use of the notion of 'class' in the dynamic sense.

Chapter Two

Imperialism and the Fijian Social Structure:1800-1874

I. Introduction

The present chapter discusses in outline the overall transformation of Fiji's economy and society from about 1800 to 1874. Its main objective is twofold. First, it attempts to show how a series of events during the period led to a gradual breakdown of the basic elements of the indigenous social structure. Second, it attempts to show that although these events occurred in Fiji and thus provided her people with a series of unprecedented experiences, they were generally interrelated, and occurred largely in the context of and as reactions to forces which were basically external to Fiji. In short, therefore, the present chapter discusses the main causes and consequences of events which are considered major turning points in Fiji's history immediately prior to her colonisation.

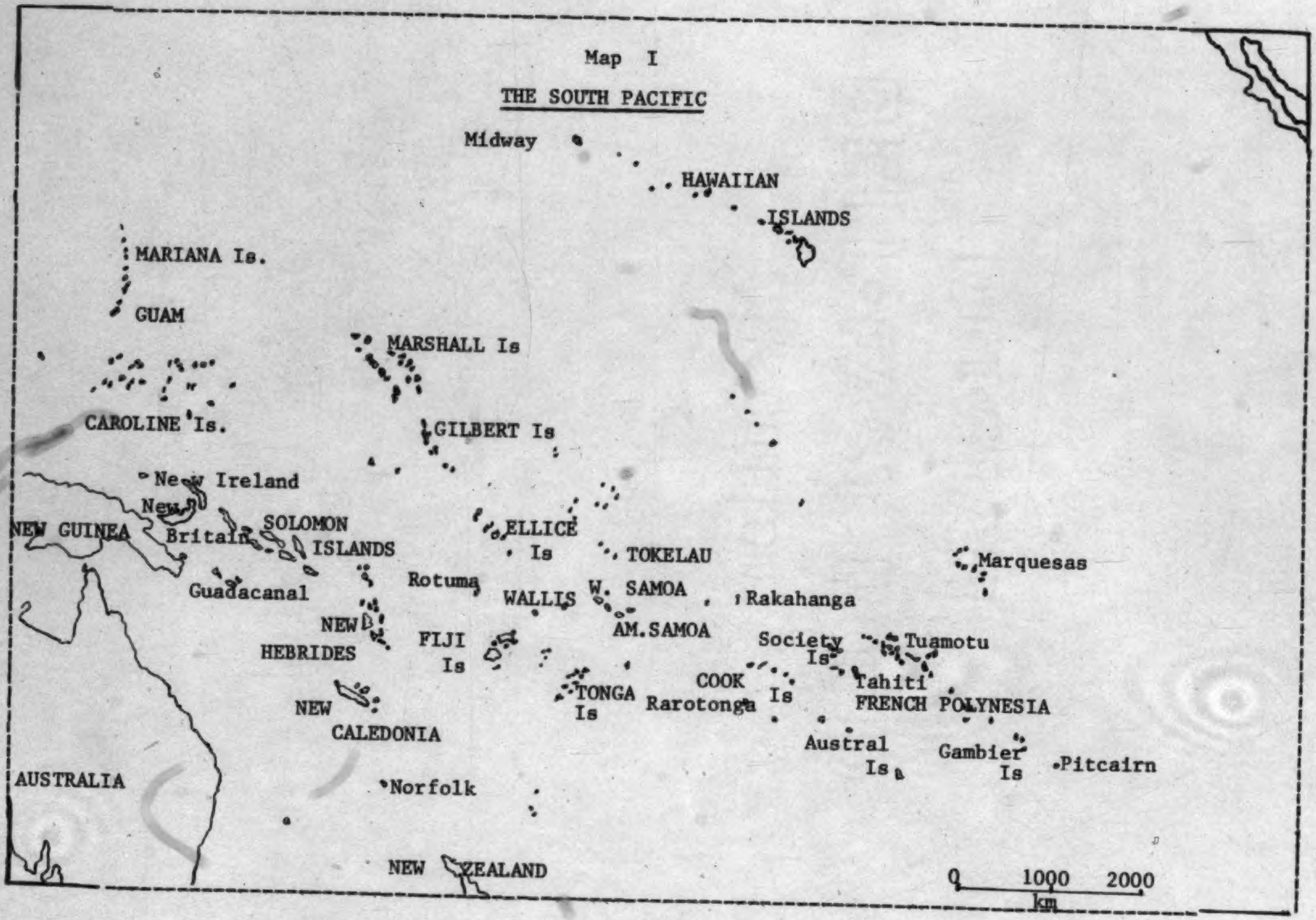
Historical records suggest that the Fijian[1] society became increasingly subject to external influences about the beginning of the 19th century. And since the present chapter is specifically concerned with the general transformation of the indigenous economy and society, some insight into the basic aspects of that society at the initial stages of European intrusion is a prerequisite to any meaningful assessment of its overall transformation. Accordingly, the first section of this chapter is devoted to a brief description of the main socio-economic and political features of the Fijian society at the time of contact.

At the time of the first European intrusion, however, no art of writing had developed among the peoples of the Pacific (Derrick, 1946:1). Therefore, in our description of the Fijian social structure of the time, we have to rely heavily on the observations and writings of others. There is, however, a marked degree of consistency among these writers and observers about the nature of the indigenous economy and society. And for the present purpose, the literature available is more than ample.

II The Pre-Imperialist Fijian Society

Despite the vast distances that separate the Pacific Islands from the more populous areas of the world (see Map I), the peoples of the Pacific were never isolated (Golson, 1972:8). There was, for instance, a continuous interaction and inter-mixing among the peoples of Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa (Derrick, 1946:5-6). There was also a continuous exchange of artifacts and ideas, and a general diffusion of culture among them. Yet, relative to the period following the first European contact, there was a marked degree of socio-economic and political stability.

Stability in this sense does not mean that the society was



Map I

THE SOUTH PACIFIC

static; it means that the basic pattern of social organization, social relations generally, and the relations to production, distribution, and exchange in particular, remained largely unaltered over considerable periods, despite the frequent inter-island and intertribal warfare.

The village or the koro was the centre of the Fijian social life. Although clustered settlements were common in the interior of the larger islands, villages were frequently sited close to the sea, both for ease of communication between the islands and between the villages, and because the sea was also a major source of food. In most cases, however, these villages were not visible from the sea and from a distance generally, though some were located on elevated positions so as to provide a clear view of the sea and the shore alike in case of enemy attack (Oliver, 1958:58).

Despite its division into numerous groups, and perhaps with equally numerous dialects, the Fijians had developed a highly complex social structure. Derrick, for instance, notes that the Melanesians generally and the Fijians in particular, had "developed material and social cultures of no mean order" (Derrick, 1946:2).

Though somewhat simplified, structurally the Fijian society was characterized by three recognized social units: the yavusa, the mataqali, and the tokatoka. A rigid form of social stratification governed the relationships within and between these units. The yavusa (community), which was the largest social unit, was composed of the direct agnatic descedants of a deified ancestor, and it was subdivided into a series of *mataqali* (which was in most areas the basic landholding unit), the heads of which were the descedants of the senior male relative of the ancestor. Each *mataqali* unit was further subdivided, under the same principle, into a series of *tokatoka*, the third and the smallest social unit. The *tokatoka* (or the family group) was the basic land-working unit, though it was not uncommon for it to be a landholding unit as well.

All *Mataqali* units were ranked on the basis of the social status derived from the proximity of their descent to the lengendary ancestor, and it was from these highly hierarchical units that the main functionaries were drawn:

(I) the ruling chiefs from the *turaga* *mataqali*
(II) the executives from the *sauturaga* *mataqali*
(III) the diplomats from the *matai-ni-vanua* *mataqali*
(IV) the priests from the *bete* *mataqali*
(V) the warriors from the *bati* *mataqali*

Including the commoners, therefore, there were within the Fijian social structure at least six social categories of men whose social status was defined by their birth and sex, though to a lesser degree the descent and the rank of the mother was taken into consideration (Derrick, 1946:8).

The Fijian society practised a fairly rigid division of labour, with the adult male generally doing the heavy work of clearing the land, going on expedition, and fighting, while the adult female did most of the manual work, both inside the house and in the nearby gardens.

At the political level, although the Fijians produced no high chiefs like those common among the Polynesian people, what chiefs there were among them generally possessed no more property than other men. The power they secured and wielded was largely dependent on their personal ability to get others to do their bidding. And the Fijian states were small:

> "Their influences depended upon the personality and the ability of their chiefs, and their success in war. The face of the political sky was always changing. Insignificant states waxed to importance; leading states suffered eclipse or waned to obscurity and servitude. Much of a chief's power depended upon his ability to hold the qali of subject people, and to control the bati or border yavusa. The subject people gave service only so long as their chief was strong enough to enforce his demands" (Derrick, 1946:23).

In the Pacific generally and in Fiji in particular, agriculture was well established at the time of first European intrusion (Barrau, 1960:1). Often the land surrounding the village and, at times, some distance away, was devoted to gardens of taro, yams, sweet potatoes, and in places surrounded by coconut, pandanus, and mulberry trees.

As in most societies, land was considered an essential element for human survival, and in the context of island societies it was always necessarily scarce. In the Fijian context, therefore, the notion of land was more than just a means of subsistence, and more than often it became an all pervading aspect of the Fijian way of life. People were seldom denied access to some land. There was no monetary value attached to it, nor was there in existence the idea that land could be owned privately, let alone the idea that it could be bought and sold for personal gains (Farrell, 1972:38).

In Fiji as well as in most Pacific societies, it was the rights to the land rather than land ownership which was most relevant and important. Although cultivation land was often entrusted to a group or clan, the rights to garden were vested in the individuals, even though these rights were subordinate to the rights of the group or clan of which they were members (Crocombe, 1972:223). Nevertheless, land often brought prestige to its trustees and those with customary rights to its use often acquired a sense of belonging to that place (Farrell, 1972:38). And although the practice of surplus production was well established in response to social and ritual needs, land which was of little use as well as that which was highly productive, and therefore producing considerable surplus, were generally held by large groups as opposed to individuals.

In the Fijian society of the time, accumulation or hoarding was neither possible nor necessary or practicable for a variety of reasons, though three of these stand out clearly. First, economic specialization in general and the production of durable goods in particular was limited, and the majority of people grew or produced the food they consumed. Second, despite the total absence of a money-economy and the use of metals, the society had developed an unique method of exchange, the institution of kerekere, which has been defined as the "practice of borrowing amongst kin at the will of the borrower"(Spate, 1959:V and 24). The practice of such a method of exchange necessarily discouraged, through ostracism at least, any effort on the part of individuals or groups to accumulate. Third, in a society which was generally homogeneous and self-sufficient, with no record of starvation, and where the institution of kerekere enabled a more even sharing out of the surpluses, there was no need for a money-economy or private ownership in property.

In general, therefore, the socio-economic and political aspects worked in close concert with each other, and everything was bound together in the one structural whole:descent, leadership, religion, social status, function, and landholding (Spate, 1959:6). It is therefore not unreasonable for us to conclude that in all its significant aspects the Fijian society was relatively stable during the period immediately prior to European intrusion.

III The Fijian Society in Transition

Having described the nature of the pre-imperialist Fijian economy and society in outline, we are now in a position to examine and assess the causes as well as the consequences of some of the key events which followed the initial phases of the imperialist contact.

For our purpose, however, the most relevant of the events would be those which present a marked contrast to the Fijian socio-economic and political patterns outlined above. Using this criterion, therefore further discussion in this chapter will be focused mainly on the following events: (a) the sandalwood and the beche-de-mer[2] trades, (b) the production of export-oriented agricultural commodities, and (c) land alienation and labour utilization. In addition, in view of the equally significant role of the Christian missionaries (Nayacakalou, 1963:175), our discussion will also take into account some of the long- and short-term implications and effects of their activities in Fiji.

As it will be shown in this and the following chapter, these and similar events, either singly or in combination, have had a profound and far-reaching impact on the future courses of events in Fiji. But these events were a part of a broader historical process, and until about the turn of the nineteenth century, they were external to Fiji. In this context, therefore, it is necessary to place due emphasis on the external forces which gave rise to them.

****

Well before the end of the 18th century, following 'the discoveries' and alongside the Christian missionary activities, the production of commodities for expanding European markets, the alienation of land, labour traffic, and trade, had become an established pattern of European practices abroad. By 1800 most of the Americas, Africa, the greater part of South and East Asia, as well as Australia and New Zealand, were already effectively colonized and incorporated into the European economies, though by then the United States had won independence and was busy building an empire of her own. Yet Fiji remained sheltered from these activities until about 1800; perhaps because the South Sea Islands were least accessible and, therefore, the least known (see Map I). But the occurrence of these events in Fiji was only a matter of time; the voyages of discovery had already paved the way.

Europeans knew nothing of Fiji until 1643, when a Dutch Captain, Abel Tasman, taking a north-west route from Tonga to Batavia, found his ships entangled among unexpected reefs and islands of the north-eastern Fiji. Because of the reef-infested waters, he could not land or make any contact with the Fijians. Thereafter, as late as 1774, Captain James Cook passed through the south-eastern Fiji (Vatoa), and in 1789, following the famous Mutiny of the Bounty on the south-eastern waters of Fiji, Captain Bligh landed on one of the islands (Tofua), but had to retreat hastily when he found the natives hostile.

By the end of the 18th century, however, several ships visited Fiji, and filled in the remaining blanks on the map. The arrival and departure of the American ship Ann and Hope in December, 1799, not only marked the end of the era of discovery of Fiji but with it also ended the long isolation of the Fijian people (Derrick, 1946: 31-36).

(a) Sandalwood and Beche-De-Mer Trades

Among the many island products which the traders from Europe, New England, and Australia sought in the Pacific were sandalwood, beche-de-mer, tortoiseshell, pearl shell and pearls (Fanning, 1833: 456-65). In the context of Fiji, however, the impact of the sandalwood and beche-de-mer trades were the most significant. And although the sandalwood trade preceded the beche-de-mer trade, the rise of the latter was closely connected with the decline of the former (Ward, 1972:95).

When the existence of sandalwood in Fiji became known to the outside world in 1804, British, Dutch, Spanish, American, and colonial traders became actively involved in sandalwood trade between Fiji and the markets of Canton and Manila. But within a short time, i.e. by 1809, the Fiji sandalwood resource was seriously depleted and many traders who could no longer fill up their ships with sandalwood alone, found an alternative income in the beche-de-mer trade. There is some evidence that beche-de-mer was collected and cured in Fiji for the first time in 1813 (Thurn and Wharton, 1825:202-5), and that the trade rose to its first peak in the early 1830's and to its second in the 1840's. By 1850's, however, the major sources on Fiji's reefs had become depleted (Ward, 1972:102, though to some extent the trade continued until 1930 when beche-de-mer trade with China came to a complete halt.

In our present context, perhaps the most relevant aspects of these two trades reside in their nature and character, and the impact that these had on the character of the Fijian society itself. It is to a brief discussion of these that we now turn.

In general, the pressure which was brought to bear upon the

Fijian social structure was entirely external. The two trades were a part of commercial capitalism which had already occurred elsewhere in the world on a much larger scale. The opening up of the Canton and Manila markets on the one hand, and the discovery of sandalwood and beche-de-mer in Fiji on the other, provided a direct impetus to traders who themselves originated from Western Europe, North America, and Australia.

Therefore, the bulk of the immediate gains from the two trades went to the coffers of outsiders who had little interest in the welfare of the Fijian people. The profits, which were immense(Seemann, 1862:228, went directly into the hands of traders and shipowners themselves, and perhaps eventually found their way to the metropolitan centres where the development of industrial capitalism was already under way.

At the internal level, however, the situation was different. The very nature and character of these two trades were such that the Fijian social structure underwent a drastic and irreversible change. Some of the more significant of these changes are outlined below:

In contrast to the islanders' experience with the eighteenth century explorers, who usually landed on the islands to obtain wood, water, and traditional food such as yams and other root crops in exchange for axes, nails, fish hooks and other goods, their contact with the traders involved a gradual adaptation to new techniques of production and exchange. The sandalwooders and the beche-de-mer traders continued to supply these goods, but in addition the sandalwood traders supplied a variety of iron tools, cloths, mirrors and ornamental goods, while the beche-de-mer traders in particular traded in firearms.

Firearms were perhaps the most distinctive contribution of the beche-de-mer traders. It is known that before 1820 firearms in Fiji were few and far between, they were usually salvaged from wrecked ships, and were almost exclusively used by European mecenaries (Derrick, 1957:42-7). But during the first peak period of the beche-de-mer trade, from 1828 to 1835, it is estimated that well over 5,000 firearms were traded in return for beche-de-mer, firewood, and agricultural produce (Ward, 1972:110). And it is believed that a similar quantity of firearms were introduced between 1842 and 1850, the second peak period of the beche-de-mer trade.

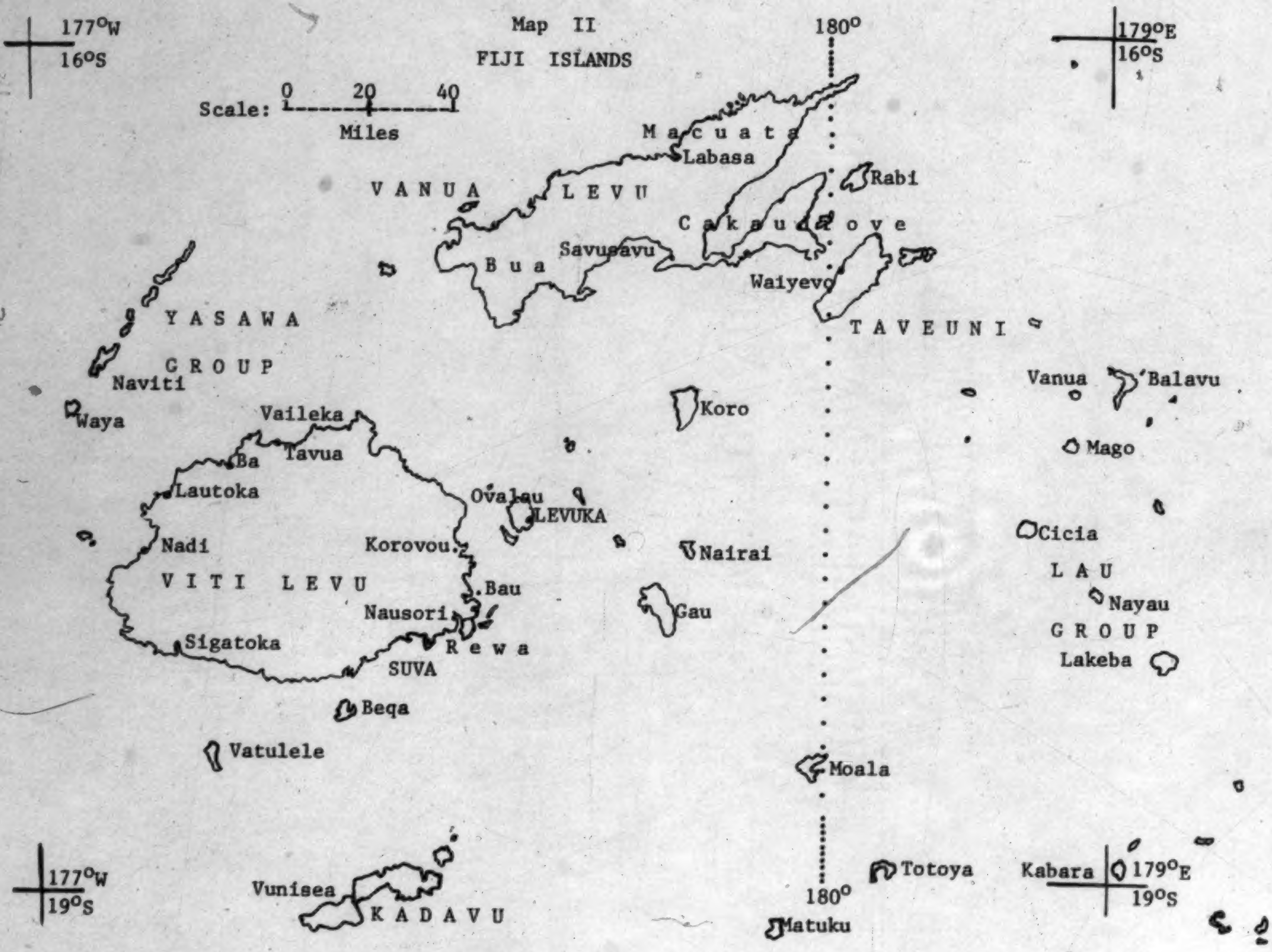
There is little doubt that the supply of firearms had the greatest effect on the Fijian political scene, though it had an equally significant effect on the demographic pattern as well. While sandalwood was found mainly along the coasts of Bua Bay and Macuata, both in Vanua Levu, beche-de-mer was highly dispersed from coast to coast and from island to island, This differential dispersion of the two trade items, combined with the fact that the sandalwooders did not trade in firearms while the beche-de-mer traders did, had an immediate effect on the Fijian political structure following the depletion of the main sandalwood sources. The traders made a rush for the beche-de-mer as an alternative source of income. They moved from island to island, usually negotiating with the local chief the collection of beche-de-mer, the supply of indigenous labour, firewood and traditional food, and generally in terms of firearms. It was therefore not surprising that the major sandalwood areas, such as Bua and Macuata, which had hitherto amassed considerable trade goods and power, suffered a marked decline, while others such as Bau and Rewa, both of which had considerable influence with important beche-de-mer localities, rose to prominence (See Map II).

This consolidation of power into increasingly fewer hands was the direct result of the introduction of firearms, mainly by the beche-de-mer traders from 1820 to 1860 and, as we shall see later, by the settler farmers in the 1860's. For as one researcher of the period points out,

> "With the introduction of the musket wars became a more serious matter, and conquest more permanent. .... As a result of victories and defeats, alliances and regroupings, Fiji as a whole presented a Hobbesian aspect, where sovereignty depended upon the fact of power, and the ability of a ruler to overcome all opposition, and not upon hereditary right" (Legge, 1958:11).

Firearms, therefore, acted as the main force behind the formation of bigger and more powerful political units. And it was to this trend that a British official on the scene in 1861 was referring to when he reported that, although there were at least forty independent chiefs, only twelve, "from their superior influence, may be considered as virtually to govern it."[3]

At the socio-economic level, the effect was equally significant,



Map II

FIJI ISLANDS

and perhaps more durable. In general both trades involved large scale operations, but as with the political structure, the beche-de-mer had a greater effect on the socio-economic structure as well. Although the sandalwood trade required considerable indigenous labour for the purposes of felling sandalwood trees, cutting them to size, and for carting and loading, the effect was less widespread and less disruptive of the Fijian social structure, because of the high concentration of sandalwood in two or three areas. And the trade lasted for a relatively short period, and the Fijians seldom worked under direct or indirect supervision of someone other than their immediate leaders or chiefs.

But with the advent of the beche-de-mer trade, which continued for about 30 years at a fairly intense pace, the Fijians had to learn an entirely new skill, experienced a new pattern of work, and for the first time worked under European supervision for months on end. The collection and curing of beche-de-mer was a highly organized operation, with each of the numerous establishments employing on average "at least thirty men, and an equal number of boys, on shore, perhaps 200 in collecting, and another 100 or so in cutting firewood" (Ward, 1972:108). Too often the completion of a full cargo meant long absences from the village and the traditional tasks, a situation which inevitably created conflicts of interest between local and alien labour demands, and at times punishments were inflicted on leaders who prevented or discouraged their people from working for the traders.

Moreover, in contrast to the pre-contact period, during the trade period the Fijians also acquired new habits, such as the consumption of alcohol, and a new sense of value of goods, and also perhaps a new method of evaluation and exchange. More specifically, their habit of kerekere underwent some change in that they were allowed to accumulate large quantities of trade goods, including a wide range of tools, ornaments, and weapons, all of which were previously unknown to them. Therefore, the competition and acquisitive habit which their experiences with the traders generated among the Fijians in the economic sphere and their implications for the Fijian social structure generally, should not be under-rated (Derrick, 1946:43).

In addition, the two trades brought about considerable changes in the pattern of agriculture and demography, and they drastically altered the Fijian social landscape. In order to acquire more trade goods, for instance, the Fijians turned to producing large quantities of food for the growing number of traders, and for the crews and numerous other workers they brought along with them, as well as for an increasing number of resident Europeans, who often acted as intermediaries between the new traders and the natives. Also large tracts of land along the coasts, and, later, in the interior, were completely deforested, initially in the process of sandalwood collection, and afterwards as the demand for firewood increased with the rising output of beche-de-mer (Farrell, 1972:40).

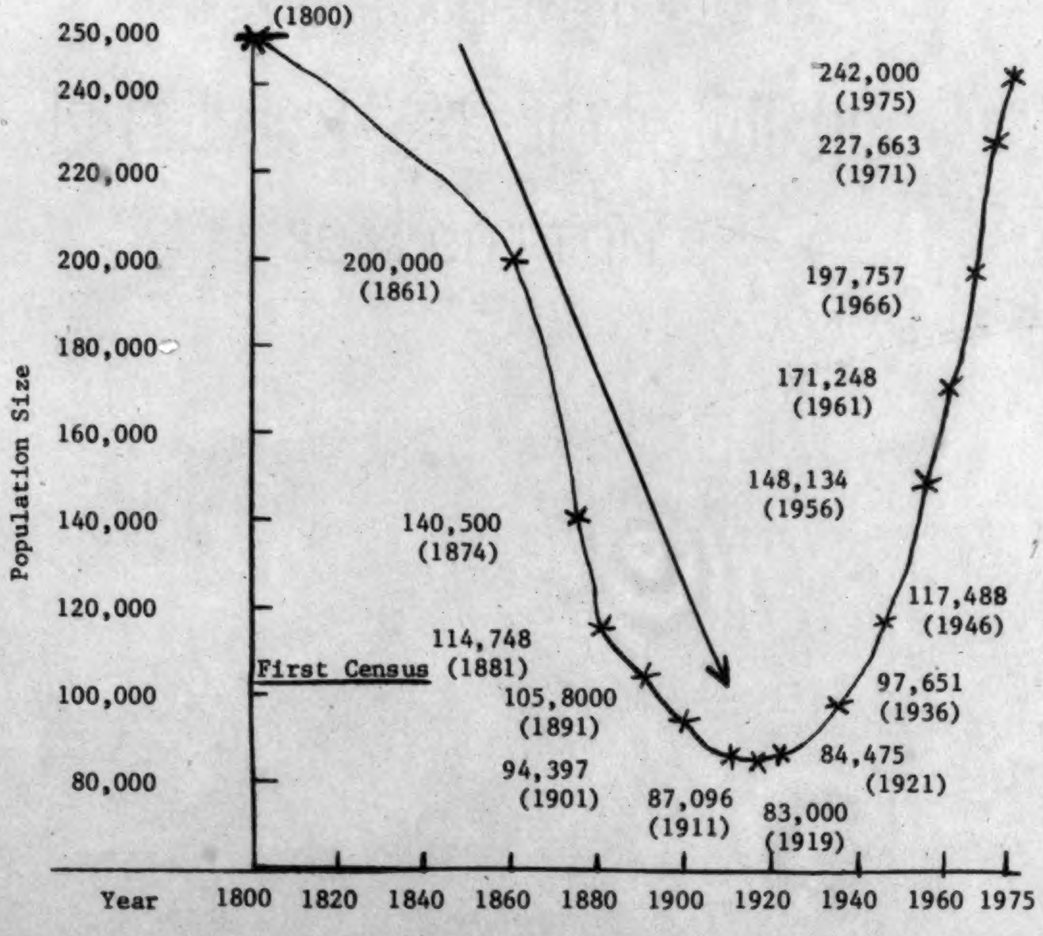
But their effect on the islands' population was the most disasterous. While it is difficult to assess separately the demographic consequences of the introduction of firearms and new diseases, their combined effect can hardly be over-estimated; the Fijian population suffered a sharp decline (See Graph I). From some 250,000 in 1800, it dropped to about 200,000 in 1861[4], to 140,500 in April 1874[5] and continued to decline for decades thereafter (McGusty, 1953:56). After having lost between 20,000 and 30,000 in the measles epidemic of 1875 and a larger number in the post-First World War influenza epidemic, the native population dropped to its lowest point of 83,000 in 1919 (Farrell, 1972:41).

And it should also be noted in passing that an entirely new influence, but in its own way "as destructive of the social fabric" (Legge, 1958:10). was exerted by the Christian missionaries who extended their operation from Tonga to Fiji in 1835. By 1861 they had converted about 60,000 natives (i.e. about a third of the population) to Christianity, had succeeded in creating a "favourable impression of England and its Government....... upon the minds of the natives", and they gave "most ready and efficient assistance" to British officials on the scene (Smythe, 1861:13). The following extract expresses only too well the extent to which Britain and other colonial powers of the time relied on the "most ready and efficient assistance" of the missionaries for solutions of important but delicate socio-economic problems.

> "The general habits and sentiments of the Fijians are opposed to the acquisition of property by individuals. The chief seizes anything belonging to his people that takes his fancy, and as readily gives it away, and the people are equally ready to beg and to give. As the influence of Christianity increases, the rule of the chief will become more mild, and private rights will be more respected" [6]

Graph I

The Effects of Firearms and Introduced Diseases on the Fijian Population



Source: Compiled from various Census Reports and the estimates given in the Fijian Documents: Political and Constitutional, 1858-1875, G.C. Henderson (ed.), Sydney: Angus and Robertson Limited, 1938.

By 1874 the success of the missionaries became clearly evident. Two British officials who were at the time on a special mission to Fiji, were quick to recognize the nature of this achievement and the benefits they were already bringing to the white planters when they observed that

> "Of the 140,500 which constitute the outside limit of the native population, 120,000 have lotued, namely, professed a wish to become Christians and have accepted a Christian teacher. They are docile and fairly intelligent... There can be no fear whatever of a collision between them and the white planters." [7]

By about mid-nineteenth century, therefore, Fiji's potentials were well exposed to the outside world, and through the combined effects of their activities in the socio-economic and political spheres, the sandalwooders, the beche-de-mer traders, and the missionaries had set the stage for the next series of events - the production of export-oriented agriculture and the utilization of land and labour.

(b) The Production of Agricultural Commodities

If the impact of the early trades was sufficient to upset the Fijian political and demographic structures, the implications and effects of the production of export-oriented agricultural comodities made still deeper inroads into the indigenous social structure. In the following discussion, which is focused mainly on the production of cotton, we therefore attempt to show in outline how the production of agricultural commodities further undermined and, indeed, drastically altered the Fijian socio-economic and political structures, and eventually created conditions which brought about the colonization of Fiji.

Unlike the early trades, which were primarily concerned with the tapping of natural resources, where the utilization of land and labour was incidental, the move to produce agricultural commodities, at once and for the first time in Fijian experience, introduced three key factors of production - land, labour, and capital - into an organized whole, and instituted money as the basic medium of exchange and reward.

There is little doubt that Fiji's soil and climate, and the nature of her socio-economic and political conditions,which the traders and missionaries had already done much to bring about, were most conducive to the introduction of settler society wholly engaged in export-oriented agriculture. But as with sandalwood and beche-demer trades, the pressure to produce agricultural commodities in Fiji was largely external. The American Civil War, which ended in 1865, caused a drastic shortage in the supply of cotton in Europe generally and in Britain in particular. In consequence, the price of cotton in the London market soared high. It was, therefore, the disruption in the production of cotton in America, combined with the consequent shortage and high price of cotton in England and Europe, which provided the main stimulus for European settlement in Fiji.

With the appointment of a British consul in 1858 and following the rumour that Britain was about to annex the islands, there was considerable influx of settlers in the early 1860's, especially from the convict colony of New South Wales and from New Zealand. And by 1862, when Britain, largely prompted by the continued uncertainty of the American Civil War, officially learnt that cotton production on a large scale was feasible in Fiji, many new industries were already established, including the extraction of coconut oil, several cotton plantations, and the manufacture of sugar on one of the islands (Wakaya). By 1866, the European population in Fiji was estimated at 400, but by the end of 1868 it had increased to 862, with a further 386 "half-castes".[8]

While during the period 1859 to 1862, exports of coconut oil rose from 50 to 500 tons a year, "cotton was the most promising, and its production was mounting rapidly" (Derrick, 1946:156). That cotton became the dominant export commodity during this period is illustrated by the fact that in 1869 it accounted for almost 79% of total exports by value, and the following year the figure jumped to over 90% (Ward, 1969:14).

But the expansion in cotton production was somewhat delayed until the middle of the decade, partly because of the absence of ginning machinery until then, which meant that cotton had to be shipped "in seed" to Sydney for cleaning, but largely because the varieties commonly grown in the early years fetched only 1s. per lb as against newly introduced Fijian Sea Island cotton which brought 4s.11d. in London in the mid-1860's (Ward, 1969;13).

And although the American Civil War had ended in 1865, and the ban on cotton exports was lifted, growing cotton in Fiji became a really attractive proposition in the later part of the decade. As one writer notes, this was largely due to the fact that

> "..... The plantations of the South had been ravaged or neglected, and it was several years before exports of cotton revived sufficiently to cause the collapse of the boom prices. In the meanwhile Fiji trade prospered, and it was expected that by 1868 cotton production in the Group would be sufficient to warrant a direct trade with Europe (Derrick, 1946:156).

But the collapse of the cotton market was only a matter of time. The Fijian Sea Island cotton, which was bringing 4s.4d. per lb a couple of years earlier, fetched only 1s.4d. in 1871, and Fiji could no longer compete with renewed export from the southern United States, especially at a time when France had cut back her purchases due to Franco-Prussian War (Derrick, 1946:197).

By 1872, however, the depression became more serious, and as the total costs of production began to exceed the total proceeds from cotton sales, many small planters were driven into bankruptcy. The tide of immigrants became one of emigrants, and as one observer wrote, it was "a grievous but common sight to see acres of land covered with the cotton bushes, and the pods allowed to fall off, because it will not pay to pick them" (Anderson, 1888:74).

If the sudden collapse of the cotton market was a harsh experience to the planters, the effects of their activities in Fiji were still worse for the indigenous society they exploited. Although a significant number had borrowed money from merchants, most planters had brought their own capital. Therefore, what they needed was an abundance of land, and a constant supply of labour, and at a minimum cost to themselves. In addition, they desired protection for themselves, their family, and their properties (Legge, 1958:13). How these needs for land, labour, and security were met, and the consequences that their fulfillment had on an already somewhat altered indigenous social structure, form the basis of the brief discussion that follows.

(c) Land Alienation and Labour Utilization

As we have already stressed in the early part of this chapter, land and labour - and not capital - were the cornerstones of the pre-imperialist Fijian society. Therefore, we could expect that any major interference with the traditional organization of land and labour would have serious repercussions on the indigenous social structure. That the capitalist planters succeeded in doing exactly that is a foregone conclusion; our task here is to show as briefly as possible how this occurred.

Alienation of large tracts of Fijian land and the recruitment of native labour on a large scale were two of the most immediate, effective, and lasting consequences of the planters' efforts to meet some of their basic needs. The utilization of land and labour on entirely new bases and for purposes which were wholly non-traditional, has continued to this day, but such patterns were set in motion during the early stages of the plantation period in Fiji's history.

Thus, except for a brief period between May 1905 and April 1908, when Europeans alienated a further 104,142 acres of Fijian land, the history of major land alienation in Fiji is covered by the period 1840 to 1874 (Ward, 1969:3-25). The rate of land alienation during this period, however, varied largely with the rise and fall in the prices of commodities in the external markets; the highest rate being during the period of increased agricultural activities, and especially from 1866 to 1872 when the price of cotton was at its highest in the London market.

With regard to the size of land and labour in use at the time, a British official reporting on the possibility of extending colonial rule to Fiji, noted in April, 1874, that

> "...... though a large area of land (854,956 acres) is owned by whites, yet only 16,524 acres are under cultivation. This cultivation employs a population of 1500 whites, and therefore, we may suppose that if the whole were under cultivation, about 25,000 whites would be employed, and that the labourers, all or nearly all of whom must be imported from other parts, would increase to 200,000 or 250,00." [9]

While this report informs us of the exact area of land claimed by foreigners in 1874, it also helps us to estimate that, along with a population of 1500 Europeans engaged on the plantations, some

15,000 natives and other islanders also worked on them. But the fact that this was a depression period when many Europeans had emigrated and perhaps a proportionate number of natives and other islanders would have lost their jobs, it can be concluded that a much larger number of Europeans and natives worked on the plantations between 1868-72, the peak cotton production period. Yet, considering the total area of Fiji (4,500,000 acres) and the size of her rapidly declining population, the size of the land claimed (19%) and labour in use (10% of the total population) was indeed significant, though from 1864 onwards increasing use was made of imported labour from other parts of the Pacific, and especially from the New Hebrides. Between 1864 and 1869 a total of 1649 labourers were imported from these sources.[10]

The foreign claims to land, however, were highly suspect and many believed that "a large number of these claims will not bear investigation" (Robinson, 1874; in Henderson, 1938:147). And indeed, as it turned out, a Land Claims Commission, which began hearings in December 1875 and reported back in February 1882, allowed only 414,615 acres of Fijian land to pass into European hands. Yet, despite the apparent rigour of its investigation, the Commission generally used the notion of continued and undisputed occupation of Fijian lands by Europeans as the main criterion determining the claimants' right to land. But as we have already noted earlier, the right to land in the indigenous context simply meant the right to use and not alienation in perpetuity, as the Commission interpreted and applied this concept. Therefore, wittingly or unwittingly, such shortcomings of the Commission were decisive in affecting permanent alienation to about 10% of Fijian land; an area which included a significant proportion of Fiji's most fertile and easily cultivable lands,i.e. 36.5% and 23.7% of the Class I and Class II land respectively on the three largest islands (Ward, 1965:121).

Yet, despite its major shortcomings in the area of decision-making which directly affected the alienation or non-alienation of native land, the Commission's Report (RLCC) provides clear evidence to the effect that most of the foreign claims to Fijian land were direct acts of fraud. Either the land was acquired very cheaply, in which case only tiny sums of money and/or small quantities of trade goods, and especially firearms, were given in return; or the land was acquired for no payment at all, in which case "the signatures of chiefs to alleged deeds of sale" (Derrick, 1946:157) often constituted the main evidence of the claims.

The charge that most land claims were backed by fraud alone is well supported by evidence from several sources. For instance, on 12th October 1874, only two days after Fiji became a British colony, the colonial government issued a public notice prohibiting further "sale, transfer or assignment of land." On 20th October 1874, foreign claims to land were only 648 in number (Robinson, 1874; in Henderson, 1938:147), and the Fiji Ordinance VI of 1875 specifically prohibited the alienation of further native land. Yet, spite of these actions, the Commission received and considered 1,683 claims. It is therefore not unreasonable to conclude that at least 1,035 of the

1,683 claims were direct acts of fraud, and the Commission's awareness of this is reflected in the fact that it honoured only 517 claims, granted *ex gracia* in part or whole to a further 390, and wholly rejected the remaining 776.[11]

Moreover, where payments were made, either in cash or in firearms (Derrick, 1946:157), the prices paid for land were extremely low indeed. As the following table clearly illustrates, even for those days when the native labourer was paid one shilling a day for

Table 2.1

Examples of Native Land Sale in Fiji, 1864-1868

Place	Year	Area in acres	Total Price	Cost per acre
Cakaudrove District:				
Viani	1864	2,000	£20	2½d.
Udu	1866	20,000	$800	2d.
Waimotu	1866	5,000	$300	2¾d.
Valavala	1868	12,800	£200	3¾d.
Vuni Sawana	1868	10,200	£100	2¼d.
Viti Levu Districts:				
Serua	1868	1,280	$150	5½d.
Kavokai Nagasau	1866	2,780	$200	3½d.
Emuri, Sigatoka	1868	3,750	$320	4¼d.
		57,810	£674	2.8d.

Source: Parliamentary Paper No.C3815, p.240; Also quoted in Derrick, 1946:157.

his labour, the price range of 2½d. to 5½d., i.e. an average of 2.8d.

per acre that was paid for land, was much too low. But still lower rates were not uncommon, and in one instance cited by the Commission, "a grant of 22,222 acres of land" was acquired "at the nominal price of 3.456 farthings per acre."[12]

If direct fraud was one common method of acquiring Fijian land, the playing off of chiefs against chiefs and people against people was yet another. With the entry of the land speculators on the scene from 1869, this practice became increasingly important and widespread, and as one minority report to the Land Commission describes, the speculators

> "......were constantly sailing about in their vessels, always on the alert to take hold of anything that might give them a chance of beginning a land transaction, such as a dispute between two chiefs, between two towns or between a chief and his territory or people....."13

But if land transactions were characterized by all kinds of fraud, trickery, deception, low prices, and the supply of weapons, the methods by which labour was acquired, utilized, and paid were not much different. At first the British settlers were optimistic about the local labour supply, and in 1859 British Consul Pritchard claimed that "there will be no scarcity of labour for the 200,000 natives estimated as the population of Fiji, will afford a large supply"[14] And indeed, during the initial stages of the development of the plantation economy, the bulk of the labour needed was recruited from within Fiji, though not generally without the consent of the respective chiefs. But the Fijian had every reason to "dislike regular and continuous employment",[15] especially since they could still dispense with the wages and trade goods given by the planters by working in their village gardens, and in any case, the plantation work was exacting, involved long hours and long absences from the village. Yet, the Fijians continued to work on the plantations so long as they received orders from their chiefs.

The planters' need for labour was almost insatiable; with every increase in acreage in response to boom prices, their demand for labour grew. But from the early 1860's there was a growing pessimism among the planters that the control by chiefs of the services of their subjects would not be conducive to the requirements of a plantation system. Thus, while the Fijians still remained the main source of labour supply at least until 1874, between 1864 and 1911 some 20,000 labourers were brought in from other parts of the Pacific to supplement the Fiji supply (Parnaby, 1964:203; 1972:126); their wages being only £2 to £3 per year and the period of contract varied from three to five years.[16]

Although most Fijian workers were themselves reluctant to work for the European planters, the main pressure against their employment came from their chiefs, for they alone were in a position to take action. Realizing the overall social and economic effects of recruitment, the chiefs increasingly opposed the depletion of village manpower.

But it was not until after Fiji became a British colony in 1874 that the question was discussed seriously at the Annual Meetings of the Chiefs and submissions were made to the British authorities. At the Draiba Meeting in 1875 the Roko Tui Ra deplored the use of Fijian labour and stated that "Men leaving their homes to work in other places causes both famine and much domestic evil." Perhaps no other document expresses so well the nature and the magnitude of the problem, and the concern over it, as the following extract taken from the note of their Rewa Meeting in early 1878:

> "We do not dislike work for we know that idleness is not right..... But what we most desire is that men should work for themselves in their several homes, that they plant plenty, that they be in a position to furnish themselves with household necessaries, that their villages be kept clean and their houses in good repair.......
>
> Our people are in many ways enticed and induced to go to work far away from their homes leaving their wives, their children, their relatives and everything in their homes in a most bitter and pitiable condition - and it is the cause of people being in a state of poverty and desolation."[17]

The success of the plantation economy, however, was a question of land and labour, and the European planters were determined to succeed. Therefore, when their efforts failed to attract Fijian labour in sufficient numbers, they resorted to other Pacific territories and to 'blackbirding' (Scarr,1967:5-24). In the meanwhile, and at least until 1879 when the first shipload of Indian immigrant workers arrived (discussed in Chapter Three), the future of the Fijian people remained highly uncertain.

Yet, even by 10th October 1874, when Fiji formally became a

British Crown Colony, the Fijian social structure presented a marked contrast to what it was like immediately prior to the contact with Europeans. And the changes were irreversible.

IV Conclusions:

The present chapter has attempted to show in historical comparative perspective how the Fijian social institutions, and especially the institutions fundamental to the indigenous social structure, underwent drastic and irreversible changes - changes which eventuated in the colonization of Fiji and which continue to plague her to this day.

Some of the direct agents of change that we have discussed above include the traders, the missionaries, and the planters of agricultural commodities. Each of these groups, either on its own and in turn, or in combination, played its role effectively and contributed its full share in the weakening of the indigenous socio-economic and political institutions, and the eventual transfer of political hegemony from the Fijian people to the British Imperial Government. Thus, the introduction of new diseases and the supply of firearms decimated the population and put an end to tribal rule; the wholesale conversion to Christianity made the natives docile, god-fearing, and instilled in them a respect for private property and a permanent feeling of guilt for their earlier heathen practices; and the introduction of trade, money, and an export-oriented plantation system not only led to the permanent alienation of native land but also, and for the first time in Fijian experience, converted land and labour into commodities that could be bought and sold, introduced and instituted private ownership in property, and generally set in motion a trend whereby Fiji became increasingly dependent upon, and incorporated into, a world market and a world economy.

Moreover, the fact that far-flung markets of Canton, Manila, and London, as well as the American Civil War and the Franco-Prussian War, at one time or another, determined the direction of these changes in Fiji confirms the external origin and character of the events themselves.

Footnotes and References

1. In this study the term 'Fijian' refers exclusively to people of native origin in Fiji.

2. Beche-de-mer, the dried flesh of the several edible species of the class Holothurioidea, the "sea-cucumbers". The Chinese used beche-de-mer as an ingredient in a number of dishes, being valued partly because of its supposed aphrodisiac qualities (Ward, 1972).

3. Smythe, 1861; in Fijian Documents:Political and Constitutional, 1858-1875, G.C. Henderson (ed.), Sydney: Angus and Robertson Limited, 1938.

4. Smythe, 1861; in Henderson, 1938:17.

5. Goodenough and Layard, 1874; in Henderson, 1938:124.

6. Smythe, 1861; in Henderson, 1938:22.

7. Goodenough and Layard, 1874; in Henderson, 1938:124.

8. Jones, 1867:500-5; also see Ward, 1969:9.

9. Goodenough and Layard, 1874; in Henderson, 1938:117.

10. Correspondence Relating to Fiji, 1871:26; also see Legge, 1958:56.

11. Corr. Rel. Fiji, 1883:29; also see Ward, 1969:3.

12. Report of the Land Claims Commission (RLCC), R1112, 1882.

13. RLCC, R546, 1882.

14. Pritchard, 1859; in Corr. Rel. to Fiji, 1862.

15. Smythe, 1861; in Henderson 1938:22.

16. Consul March, 1869; in Corr. Rel. to Fiji, 1871.

17. Roko Tuis of Fiji, 1878; in the Proceedings of the Annual Meetings of the Chiefs of Fiji.

Chapter Three

Colonialism and the Emergence of a Capitalist Structure: 1874-1945

I Introduction:

The imperialist activities of the decades preceding the formal colonization of Fiji had set in motion two basic developmental trends or processes: the gradual erosion and eventual subservience of the indigenous social structure, and the emergence of an entirely new structure. This emergent structure, its expansion, and its effects on the economy and society of Fiji, constitute the basic focus of the present chapter.

In general, there were two main aspects to this structure, one external and the other internal. While its external aspect was characterized by Fiji's increasing incorporation into and dependence upon the world economy, its internal dimension was marked by the gradual institution and development of an essentially capitalist mode of production, distribution, and exchange.

The basic aim of the present chapter is therefore to discuss in outline the implications and consequences that the interaction of these twin structural aspects had for the content and direction of Fiji's history during the period 1874 to 1945. In general, it will show that the gradual incorporation of Fiji into the world economy made her increasingly dependent on the world market, and that such dependence had direct consequences not only on the internal organization and utilization of land, labour, and capital but, through these, also on the general nature and character of Fiji's economy and society as a whole. In other words, the chapter will not only show how both the relations to the means of production and the mode of production became essentially capitalist in character, but it will also show how the increased imperialist activities which followed this dependence had the effect of transforming Fiji into a subordinate capitalist society. In short, the present chapter attempts to show how the relations and conditions which evolved during the first phase of imperialism led to the emergence of a dependent capitalist society in the second - a phase during which Fiji became increasingly characterized by uneven development from within and underdevelopment from without.

II External Relations and Internal Conditions

The extension of formal colonial rule marked not only the end of one chapter in Fiji's history, but also the beginning of another. The relations and conditions which came into existence as a direct result of the first period of imperialism contained the dynamics of Fiji's history for decades to come. It is to a brief discussion of these forces and their consequences over time that we now turn.

(a) The External Relations

The extent of Fiji's incorporation into and dependence upon the outside world were clearly reflected in the nature and the character of her external relations. Essentially there were three kinds or levels of external linkages. At the political level, Fiji joined the rank as one of the numerous British possessions in far-flung corners of the globe, and became subject to major policy decisions from the outside. At the economic level, the vagaries of the international markets determined the prices, and through these, the types and the quantities of commodities produced in Fiji. At the ethical and spiritual level, the Fijian people became subject to Christian rules of conduct as interpreted and handed down by religious leaders in Europe and elsewhere.

That these linkages with external socio-religious, economic, and political institutions were not merely symbolic but real were reflected in the presence and functions of the respective institutinal agents in Fiji. Thus the colonial administrators carried out the task of government within the broad policy framework handed down to them by the imperial government. Similarly, the capitalist planters, the merchants, and other settlers always looked up to the London markets for possible changes in commodity and manufacture prices, and their production and trade activities varied accordingly. And the Christian missionaries, who were as eager in their work as those found anywhere, continually received their directives and blessings from their respective society headquarters abroad. And, of course, they supported colonization and the spread of "civilization."

In general, therefore, the nature and character of Fiji's socio-economic and political incorporation into and dependence upon the outside world were directly reflected in the presence and functions of these social groups. That these groups were the only agents of British imperialism in Fiji is reflected in the fact that they were the only means through which the external socio-economic and political pressures became operative internally.

The brief discussion that follows attempts to outline both the nature of the conditions which existed internally during the early years of the colonial rule, and the problems which arose from these.

(b) The Internal Conditions

The imperialist activities of the earlier period had produced conditions which threatened the existence of the planters and the natives alike. These conditions, the nature of the problems they generated, and the efforts made to overcome them, form the main focus of the brief discussion that follows.

At the beginning of the colonial rule, Fiji was in the midst of an economic depression. The production of cotton, which constituted the main export item in the late 1860's, had risen sharply in response to high prices in the London market, which in turn was influenced by the disruption in cotton export during the American Civil War. But the slump in prices which followed the over-production in the early 1870's, led to an economic depression from which Fiji was still attempting to recover in the mid 1870's.

From the mid 1860's, however, a beginning was also made to produce sugar and other tropical commodities in small quantities (Potts, 1959:16-17). In south-east Viti Levu, where sugar became the main crop in the 1870's, cane had been grown as a minor crop by Fijians for sometime (Ward, 1969:22). In the early 1870's, its production there was actively encouraged by the European dominated native government,[1] which offered "a premium of £500 sterling for the first and best crop of twenty (20) tons of sugar, produced from canes planted --- previous to January, 1873".[2] As a result, several small sugar mills became established in the 1870's, the first being at Suva in 1872, followed by others, along the Rewa River, on the Savu Savu coast, and in southern Taveuni (Potts, 1959:16-17).

Therefore, when the cotton market failed and the price of sugar in the London market still remained somewhat high and stable,[3] the planters moved to substitute sugar for cotton as an export commodity.[4] But while still attempting to recover from an economic depression, the efforts of the settlers were further frustrated by additional socio-economic and political conditions which came into existence directly as a result of the first phase of imperialism.

Unlike the price of cotton, which had taken a sharp fall due to over-production, the price of sugar remained fairly steady during the whole of the 1860's and 1870's. Therefore, the source of the cane planters' frustration lay not so much in the foreign competition as in the interplay of several internal factors. In general, their capital resources were meagre, and their costs of production were high.

The former factor was attributable to the economic depression itself and the planters could not do much about it.[5] It was therefore with the latter factor, the high costs of production, and the conditions which gave rise to them, that their grievances lay.

Basically, the problem was one of labour supply. The settlers had hoped that, with the formal colonization of Fiji, labour would be plentiful and cheap and therefore they would be able to meet all the necessary costs of production and would still be left with a comfortable margin of profit for themselves. Like the cotton planters before them, the cane planters therefore expected an abundant and assured supply of cheap labour, which they could use as and when their need arose. But as we have already indicated in the preceding chapter, the Fijians were neither able nor willing to meet this renewed demand for labour. And, to make matters worse, the colonial government brought in a series of legislation which militated directly against the interests of the planters. The circumstances surrounding the shortage of Fijian and Pacific Island labour and the problems that this generated are briefly discussed below.

The general unwillingness of the Fijians to work for the capitalist planters arose for a variety of reasons. On the one hand, the working conditions on the plantations were harsh and exacting, and involved long absences from the village and, on the other, the native Fijian could see little reason in contracting to serve for three years[6] on a plantation when he still had the alternative of working in the relative self-sufficiency of the village setting. As Thurston had earlier observed,

> "The fact is that no Fijian will go from home to be worked from morning to night, upon paltry pay, indifferent fare, and frequently anything but mild treatment, if he can avoid doing so. His wants are few, and he is indisposed to sustained labour. --- the cultivation of his own Qali land is infinitely more interesting to him and more in accordance with his proclivities, than the cultivation of a stranger's land, distant a hundred miles perhaps from the place he was born."[7]

But the repelling conditions of the plantations and the pull of the village in themselves do not fully explain their new reluctance to work on the plantations, since they had worked, though grudgingly, on the cotton plantations during the earlier period, even if only with the consent or on the request of their immediate chiefs or elders. The new situation was different, and even more serious, for very often even large presents and bribes were not sufficient to induce the chiefs and elders to agree to the requests of the planters.[8]

The main reason underlying the Fijians' refusal to work for the settlers, however, lay in their inability to supply labour. The native population had already suffered a marked decline (See Fig. I, Chapter II), and the trend was still continuing, largely due to the introduction of firearms, new diseases,[9] and the British efforts, even after the extension of colonial rule, to subdue the natives.[10]

Moreover, the growing concern and unrest among the natives over the future of their people and native institutions, and the consequent refusal to work for the planters, had already found support among a few of the leading colonial officials - though hardly for the same reasons. In particular, the first Governor of Fiji, Sir Arthur Gordon, who clearly saw the wider implications of the Fijians' concern over a rapidly declining population and the breakdown of the indigenous institutions, legislated protective measures in an attempt to preserve whatever remained of the local customs and the local political machinery. The outcome was his Native Policy, the consequences of which on the natives and others will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

But unlike those of the natives, the objectives underlying Gordon's concern over the natives, and his consequent attempt to preserve the Fijian way of life, were not dissimilar to those which had given rise to similar colonial practices elsewhere. As Gillion aptly put it, these colonial practices

> "--- originate in the need to maintain order and to win the support of the local population with a minimum of expense and dislocation." (Gillion, 1962:7)

That Gordon himself was acutely aware of this is clearly shown in the following extract taken from his submissions to the Legislative Council:

> "So long as the native population outnumbers the European by an hundred to one, it is through these chiefs that the country will be most peaceably, cheaply and easily governed -- and the Governor has already observed that in those districts where for one or another cause the Chiefs have lost their hold on the people, the administration of affairs is attended with a difficulty and confusion unknown elsewhere. If deprived of position and employment they would, not

> improbably, from being docile and useful instruments, become a constant source of trouble if not even of danger."[11]

In line with this diagnosis, the resulting Native Policy therefore included the following essential features: the embodiment of a separate native code of laws to enable the administration of native affairs through the Fijian chiefs; the prohibition of further land alienation and the vesting of most of the remaining land in Fijian communities; the introduction of a native tax scheme; and the imposition of restriction on the use of Fijian labour. Of these, the two aspects which are of immediate interest to us are the labour legislation[12] and the native taxation system.[13] These two measures were interdependent and complementary to each other; without one the intended efficacy of the other would be, at best, limited. They both had the effect of discouraging native labour supply to the settlers. Alternatively, the combined effect of their operation meant an important and a regular source of revenue to the colonial government -- a source that could be regulated at the government's will.

The labour Ordinance of 1876, for instance, dealt with the recruitment of native and island labour for a period exceeding one month.[14] It provided that such contracts were to be endorsed by a stipendiary magistrate to the effect that the natives knew of the nature of the contract and that they entered it of their own accord. In addition, all such labourers were to be paid in the presence of a stipendiary magistrate, and the terms of service were not to exceed one year. It also stipulated a ration scale and, in case of ill-treatment, it empowered the Governor not only to cause the cancellation of all such contracts, but also to refuse to allow further endorsement of contracts to employers who had 'forfeited the confidence' of the Governor.

That the restrictions placed on the recruitment of Fijian labour were intended as direct financial as well as political gains to the colonial government were clearly reflected in the nature of the native tax system. As Gordon himself put it, "the taxation of the natives by commodities instead of money ---- has the double merit of raising a large revenue and raising in a manner acceptable to those from whom it is derived."[15]

Though Gordon's fear of native rebellion was the key factor in his formulation of the native policy, the influence of certain other factors were also important. More specifically, the colonial government's assessment of the capability of the planters and the pressure from the Colonial Office that Fiji's expenditure must be kept within the limits of her own resources, were important considerations.

Whether with or without ample labour supply, the colonial government believed that the planters were neither resourceful nor efficient and therefore they were, as a group, a liability to government revenue. As Gordon saw them,

> "The white settlers have as a body been painted in blacker colours than they deserve. There are among them some very bad characters but as a rule they are well meaning indolent bankrupt folks.......
>
> But though I do not think they deserve morally the

> censures which have been heaped upon them I must nevertheless confess harsh as the sentiment may appear that I believe the best thing which could happen to Fiji would be the utter sweeping off of its present race of ruined proprietors. The Colony would have a much better prospect before it were there no settlers in it at all than it has now with bankrupts and gamblers stopping up every avenue...........
>
> Harsh as it may seem I believe that prosperity will be unknown in Fiji until the majority of the present planters have either sold their holdings to others or have sunk under mortgages and have made way for men of larger capital and wider views."[16]

Penetrating as this assessment was, it clearly meant that the colonial government would have to depend elsewhere than on local planters for the major part of its revenue. And certainly not on the Colonial Office, which had already found it necessary to warn the colonial government of the financial stringency within which Fiji was to be administered and that it must live within "the means and resources of the Colony."[17] Indeed, when approving the Native Policy, the Colonial Office made Fiji's financial success almost a condition of that approval. A private letter from the Colonial Office to the Governor read:

> "The Native policy was, as you have anticipated, rather a large pill to swallow, but we have swallowed it bravely in order to give you the chance you desire of proving that you can govern the natives instead of killing them off. Do not, however, check white settlement more than you can help.
>
> Finance is, of course, as ever, my chief anxiety with regard to Fiji. Neither you not Lord Carnarvon will be considered to have succeeded as long as you are in deficit."[18]

It was, therefore, the fear of a native rebellion, together with the need to find an assured means of raising a large revenue, that led the colonial government to resort to a carefully designed Native Policy - a policy which achieved its immediate objectives of both pleasing the native chiefs and raising a large part of the revenue through them.[19]

But the pressure from the planters to do away with Gordon's Native Policy was becoming increasingly unbearable to the colonial government. Though their own intention was to exploit Fijian labour, they assailed the Native Policy as slavery for the Fijians and ruin for the Europeans.[20] Apart from their anxiety over the settlement of the land claims,[21] labour was the chief concern of the planters in the 1870's. As the Fiji Times lamented:

> "The all-absorbing question of the hour, one which seems to supersede almost every other consideration, at least in the minds of the producing class in this Colony, is that of the labour supply."22

And despite Gordon's view of the ability and the resources of the planters, he felt that it was only a matter of time before he would have to give in to the pressure which was mounting from all sides. In any event, in his earlier speeches to the planters he had already promised that, when the crunch came, he would be on their side:

> "I have no sympathy with those whose philanthropy demanded that they should think little of their own race and colour. My sympathy for the coloured races is strong; but my sympathy for my own race is stronger. Those who had under no ordinary amount of hardship, privation and toil, laid the foundation of civilization here were entitled to the warmest sympathy and they would certainly have mine."23

That the colonial government's Native Policy was more an act of political and economic expediency than of benevolence to the Fijians, becomes still clearer from Gordon's private letters to Gladstone. One passage read thus:

> "I am afraid that from the heights of finance you will look down on such expedients as barbarous, and inaccurate in principle. But we are dealing with a semi-barbarous people whose ideas and peculiarities must be humoured if we are to obtain their hearty cooperation."[24]

Nevertheless, caught between the conflicting interests of the planters and the natives, the colonial government sought hard for a solution to the dilemma posed. Its own interests did not ease the problem either. To give up the Native Policy meant not only an immediate loss of revenue and Fijian confidence in the government, but also political chaos and, most probably, the eventual enslavement of the Fijian people - a situation which would have been difficult to countenance in view of the fact that slavery was already formally abolished by the British Parliament in 1833. On the other hand, to ignore the wishes of the planters for long meant a direct conflict with the government's own long-range policy to develop Fiji's resources through European capitalist enterprises. Though this later policy was never made explicit by the colonial government, it was reflected in its encouragement of and, indeed, in its active participation in, the recruitment of Pacific Island labour.[25]

But "the Pacific Islands' labour was quite certain to die off before long"[26] and, therefore, on balance, the choice was either to give up the Native Policy and face the consequences, or to retain that policy by securing an alternative source of labour for the planters. In the final analysis, therefore, unless and until an alternative supply of labour was found, the survival of the Fijians remained hung on a rather delicate balance.

It is in the context of this dilemma that the immigration of indentured Indian labour to Fiji, the consequent rationalization of the Fiji sugar industry, and indeed the very survival of the Fijian people, become most meaningful.

When seeking the approval of the Colonial Office for the immigration of Indian workers to Fiji, Gordon justified his request in the following terms:

> "I must confess, moreover, that the consideration weighs not a little with me that unless labour is thus obtained, I fear it will be very difficult to withstand the pressure which will be brought to bear upon the Government to consent to measures intended to coerce the native population of this Colony into an involuntary servitude, or at all events to wink at practices not consistent with fair dealing."[27]

In the 1870's, therefore, Fiji was plagued by two related problems: the need to supply sufficient and cheap labour, and the need to attract large enough capital. It was clear that Fiji could not provide either without first enslaving the Fijians or finding an alternative source of labour supply. The planters could not provide the necessary capital, since the formation of capital itself depended on the supply of cheap labour. In the final analysis, therefore, all production hinged on the supply of labour. For, with more than ample alienated land available for the growing of sugarcane and other tropical products, no man "with larger capital and wider views" would invest in Fiji in the absence of an assured labour supply.

By 1879, however, the colonial government found a way out of the problem - even if the costs to those it used in the bargain were much too high.

In the following sections we intend to discuss briefly the factors leading to the rationalization of the Fiji sugar industry, the changing character of production, and the changing relations to the means of production, distribution and exchange. In the later case, our main emphasis will be on class formation, class consciousness and class conflicts.

III. The Rationalization and Expansion of the Fiji Sugar Industry

Land, labour, capital, and market, both singly and in combination, were the four most crucial factors in the rationalization and development of the Fiji sugar industry. The manner in which these factors were utilized, for what purposes, and to what ends, make up the subject matter of the following brief discussion.

We have already discussed the significance of these factors in the history of Fiji up to the end of the 1870's, and the role they played in relation to the conditions which came into existence during that peroid. In particular, we have shown that Fiji's most pressing problem in the late 1870's did not lie with land or market, but rather with labour and capital. Though both these factors were scarce, labour was the factor most sorely needed and sought after. Therefore, it was clearly evident that only with the introduction of labour from the outside that Fiji's economy could once again move at an accelerated pace.

The colonial government had considered the introduction of Indian labour at least as early as 1875,[28] but it was not until 1877 that its request received the approval of the Colonial Office.[29] However, between 15th May, 1879 and 11th November, 1916, when further recruitment under the Indian Indenture System[30] was suspended, a total of 60,553 Indians were brought to Fiji (Table 3.1).

While economically they generally came from poor homes, in socio-cultural terms these immigrants represented a fair cross-section of the Indian population. As the figures on emigration from Calcutta to Fiji shows, about 85% were Hindus and they were drawn from all the main castes (Table 3.2).

Until 1902 all Indian immigrants to Fiji came through Calcutta. It was only after this time, when it became increasingly difficult to recruit through this source, that the recruitment from the South, through Madras, was opened up. As a result, about three-quarters of the immigrants to Fiji were North Indians.

With regard to their age and sex distribution, the information on recruits who came through Calcutta shows that almost all of them

Table 3.1

A LIST OF SHIPS, DATES OF ARRIVAL, AND REGISTERED NUMBERS OF IMMIGRANTS

Ship No.	Name of Vessel and No. of Voyage	Date of Arrival	Registered Nos.	
			From	To
1	Leonidas	15 May 1879	1	463
2	Berar	29 June 1882	464	887
3	Poonah I	17 Sept. 1882	888	1364
4	Poonah II	19 June 1883	1365	1860
5	Bayard	20 Aug. 1883	1861	2354
6	Syria	14 May 1884	2355	2792
7	Howrah	26 June 1884	2793	3287
8	Pericles	3 July 1884	3288	3748
9	Newnham, S.S.	23 July 1884	3749	4323
10	Maine	30 April 1885	4324	5048
11	Ganges	27 June 1885	5049	5571
12	Boyne	26 April 1886	5572	6108
13	Bruce	21 May 1886	6109	6566
14	Hereford I	24 April 1888	6567	7105
15	Moy I	3 May 1889	7106	7782
16	Rhone I	15 May 1890	7783	8367
17	Allanshaw	17 June 1890	8367	8940
18	Danube	15 June 1891	8941	9531
19	Jumna	27 June 1891	9532	9978
20	British Peer	23 April 1892	9979	10505
21	Avon I	5 May 1892	10506	11025
22	Hereford II	15 June 1892	11026	11504
23	Moy II	14 April 1893	11505	11971
24	Jumna II	23 May 1893	11972	12281
25	Ems I	20 April 1894	12282	12851
26	Hereford III	28 June 1894	12852	13362
27	Vadala, S.S.	26 March 1895	13363	14109
28	Virawa I,S.S.	26 April 1895	14110	14786
29	Erne	24 April 1896	14787	15343
30	Elbe I	13 June 1896	15344	15958
31	Rhone II	11 May 1897	15959	16611
32	Clyde	1 June 1897	16612	17281
33	Moy III	1 June 1898	17282	17849
34	Avon II	25 July 1899	17850	18316
35	Ganges	3 Sept. 1899	18317	18780
36	Ganges	21 June 1900	18781	19334
37	Elbe II	26 July 1900	19335	19938
38	Arno I	23 July 1900	19939	20565
39	Rhine	30 Aug. 1900	20566	21056
40	Fazilka I, S.S	28 March 1901	21057	21860
41	Fultala I,S.S	12 May 1901	21861	22669
42	Fazilka II,S.S	18 June 1901	22670	23445

Continued

Ship No.	Name of Vessel and No. of Voyage	Date of Arrival	Registered No.s	
			From	To
43	Virawa II,S.S	26 April 1902	23446	24163
44	Fazilka III, S.S	20 June 1902	24164	25003
45	Mersey	13 June 1903	25004	25588
46	Elbe III	5 Aug. 1903	25589	26178
47	Arno II	4 Sept. 1903	26179	26812
48	Arno III	3 May 1904	26813	27443
49	Ems II	30 July 1904	27444	27969
50	Fultala II	10 April 1905	27970	28796
51	Virawa III	17 July 1905	28797	29411
52	Wardha I	28 July 1905	29412	30303
53	Fultala III	17 Aug. 1905	30304	31093
54	Fazilka IV	17 April 1906	31094	31974
55	Fultala IV	28 April 1906	31975	32775
56	Wardha II	28 June 1906	32776	33609
57	Fazilka V	28 Jan. 1907	33610	34484
58	Virawa IV	23 March 1907	34485	35243
59	Fazilka VI	25 April 1907	35244	36039
60	Sangola I	18 March 1908	36040	37171
61	Sangola II	6 June 1908	37172	38257
62	Sangola III	1 Feb 1909	38258	39409
63	Sangola IV	21 April 1909	39410	40076
64	Sangola V	7 March 1910	40077	41002
65	Santhia I	22 April 1910	41003	42023
66	Sangola VI	5 June 1910	42024	42892
67	Santhia II	8 July 1910	42893	43922
68	Mutlah I	22 May 1911	43923	44756
69	Sutlej I	25 June 1911	44757	45606
70	Ganges I	22 July 1911	45607	46466
71	Mutlah II	18 Aug. 1911	46467	47329
72	Sutlej II	4 Oct. 1911	47330	48140
73	Sutlej III	27 April 1912	48141	48997
74	Indus	8 June 1912	48998	49801
75	Ganges II	18 July 1912	49802	50644
76	Ganges III	8 Nov. 1912	50645	51490
77	Ganges IV	21 Feb. 1913	51491	52261
78	Sutlej IV	11 April 1913	52262	53069
79	Ganges V	29 May 1913	53070	53917
80	Ganges VI	9 Sept. 1913	53918	54701
81	Chenab I	24 March 1914	54702	55556
82	Chenab II	16 June 1914	55557	56273
83	Mutlah III	7 May 1915	56274	57125
84	Ganges VII	21 June 1915	57126	57971
85	Mutlah IV	1 Aug. 1915	57972	58783
86	Chenab III	1 Sept. 1916	58784	59665
87	Sutlej V	11 Nov. 1916	59666	60553

Source: Labour Department, Suva, Fiji.

Table 3.2

EMIGRATION FROM CALCUTTA TO FIJI, 1879-1916

Religions and Castes of Emigrants
(as given in Calcutta emigration reports)

	Percentage to Total Males	Percentage to Total Females	Percentage to Total Emigrants
Hindus			
Brahmins and High Caste	17.0	14.2	16.1
Agriculturalists	32.7	28.4	31.3
Artisans	6.9	6.5	6.7
Low Castes	29.3	35.0	31.2
Muslims	14.0	15.8	14.6
Christians	0.1	0.1	0.1
	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Gillion, 1962:209

were under forty years of age and well over 73 per cent were of good working age, since children above the age of fifteen were also taken as indentured workers. Moreover, about 70 per cent of the recruits were males (Table 3.3).

These indentured workers came to Fiji on five-year contracts. Initially they worked for nine hours a day, and at a fixed wage of one shilling a day per adult male and nine pence a day per adult female. Their passage to Fiji was free; but the free passage back to India only accrued after ten years' of residence in the Colony, though they were free to return after serving the five-year contract, so long as they paid

Table 3.3

EMIGRATION FROM CALCUTTA TO FIJI, 1879-1916

Ages of Emigrants
(as given in Calcutta emigration reports)

Age Group	Percentages to Total Number of Emigrants		
	Males	Females	Total
Under 2	1.3	1.3	2.6
2 - 10	3.3	2.4	5.7
10 - 20	12.4	5.5	17.9
20 - 30	48.8	19.9	68.7
30 - 40	3.7	1.2	4.9
Over 40	0.1	0.1	0.2
	69.6	30.4	100.0

Source: Gillion, 1962:210

their own way back to India. None of these contracts, however, made any mention of the harsh conditions of compulsory labour and the penal laws, to which all workers were subjected soon after their arrival on Fiji's plantations (Andrews and Pearson, 1918:13). A typical contract is reproduced as Appendix I to this thesis.

Except during the years of good harvest and/or severe competition for labour from Assam and the other colonies, the flow of Indian immigrants to Fiji was determined entirely by demand from Fiji. The colonial government subsidized as much as one-third of the total recruitment and emigration costs to the planters, and it determined the annual requisition for Indian labour on the basis of its own needs and those of the planters.

The introduction of the Indian indentured workers to Fiji, however, had much wider and deeper implications than the mere satisfaction of the existing planters' need for cheap labour. In particular, the availability of this factor meant that all the major conditions necessary for attracting capital from the outside were satisfied. Political security was already assured by the existence of a colonial government; the alienation of large tracts of fertile land from the natives had already taken place and,therefore, land could be acquired for large size plantations at almost nominal costs; and Fiji's being a colony of Britain meant easy access to an almost insatiable London market. But now that the Colonial Office had granted approval to Fiji's request for Indian immigration, an unlimited supply of cheap and expendable labour was virtually assured and it was only a matter of time before some capitalist would enter the scene. That this occurred perhaps sooner than expected is evidenced by the arrival of the Sydney based Colonial Sugar Refining Company in May, 1880 - scarcely a year after the first shipload of Indian workers landed in Fiji.

But for the stability of the market, the arrival of capital presented a situation in which Fiji's economy, and especially the rationalization and expansion of the Fiji sugar industry, could proceed unhampered. Yet, from 1880 onwards the sugar industry expanded even in spite of unstable market conditions, and during a period when sugar prices were generally low and the wages of the plantation workers had remained fixed.

Since 1880 the history of Fiji is closely tied up with the expansion of the sugar industry, which has continued to be the most important single factor in the economy. And to discuss the history of the Fiji sugar industry is to describe the activities of the CSR Company, a Sydney-based multinational firm. The company's history is one of continued economic expansion and dominance in Fiji until 1973, when local conditions compelled it to pull out of the country (discussed further in Chapters V and VII).

In the early 1880's, several smaller sugar companies besides CSR Company had sprung up on Fiji. But, as table 3.4 illustrates, the price of sugar, which had remained somewhat high and steady, fell sharply in 1884, and except for a brief period of recovery, remained relatively low until 1916. To the smaller companies, which were operating on smaller capital, the 1884 slump in sugar prices was a severe blow. Indeed, only four of the smaller companies survived the depression that had set in. These included the Fiji Sugar Company at Navua, which had started in 1883 and was the second largest, with investments totalling £120,000 (or about $600,000) by the end of the century; Frazer and Company of Penang, Ra, which had begun operation in 1878 by Chalmers Brothers and later, in 1922, was acquired by the CSR Company; a small company owned by planters at Tamavua; and Holmhurst on the island of Taveuni, which was owned by the Bank of New Zealand Estates Company (Potts, 1959:16-17; Gillion, 1962:78). By the turn of the century, however, only the CSR Company and the Fiji Sugar Company remained the effective producers and exporters of Fiji sugar.

Table 3.4

Prices and Average Price of Raw Sugar (CIF) in London - 1861 to 1939 (in shillings per cwt.)

Year	Price	Year	Price	Year	Price	Year	Price
1861	22	1881	21/3	1901	9/3	1921	18/3
1862	20	1882	20/0	1902	7/3	1922	15/3
1863	21	1883	19/0	1903	8/6	1923	25/9
1864	26	1884	13/3	1904	10/3	1924	21/9
1865	22	1885	13/6	1905	11/0	1925	12/9
1866	21	1886	11/9	1906	8/6	1926	12/3
1867	22	1887	11/9	1907	9/3	1927	13/9
1868	22	1888	13/0	1908	9/9	1928	11/7
1869	24	1889	16/0	1909	10/3	1929	9/0
1870	23	1890	13/0	1910	11/0	1930	6/7
1871	25/6	1891	13/6	1911	11/6	1931	6/4
1872	25/6	1892	13/6	1912	11/0	1932	5/9
1873	22/6	1893	14/3	1913	9/6	1933	5/3
1874	21/6	1894	11/3	1914	11/7	1934	4/9
1875	20/0	1895	10/0	1915	14/4	1935	4/8
1876	21/6	1896	10/9	1916	24/3	1936	4/9
1877	24/6	1897	9/3	1917	31/6	1937	6/4
1878	20/0	1898	9/6	1918	33/0	1938	5/5
1879	19/0	1899	10/6	1919	38/5	1939	7/4
1880	20/6	1900	11/3	1920	58/0		

Source: Deerr, 1949:531

The latter company changed its name to Vancouver-Fiji Sugar Company in 1905 following its acquisition by a syndicate from Canada (Gillion, 1962:100-101), and by 1922 it went out of production (Brookfield and Hart, 1971:132).

Unlike the smaller sugar companies, the CSR Company was backed by large capital and know-how in the field of sugar production and marketing (Brookfield and Hart :129-30 and Lowndes, 1956). In 1882, its first sugar mill in Fiji came into operation at Nausori, on the Rewa delta, and, in the following year, it began the construction of its second major mill at Rarawai, Ba (Lowndes, 1956:27). The third mill was erected at Labasa in Vanua Levu in 1890, followed by the construction of the fourth and the largest, which came into operation in 1901 at Lautoka.

By 1885 the company had invested over £500,000 (or over $2,500,000) in Fiji, and had made large loans to planters in an effort to increase their supply of sugarcane to its mills. And by 1900, the company's investments amounted to well over one million pounds, which increased in excess of £1,400,000 in 1903, and its production of raw sugar in 1900 accounted for about 82 per cent of the total exported from the Colony (Lowndes, 1956:443; Gillion, 1962:78-79 and 97).

This rapid increase in the number of sugar mills and the continuing increase in the size of its investments were more than matched by the continued increase in the size of its sugar production. The company's production of raw sugar increased from 11,859 tons in 1890, to 25,574 tons in 1900, and to 62,776 tons in 1910. In relation to its combined operations in Fiji and Australia, its Fiji output of 1890 represented only 26 per cent of its total sugar production, whereas the figure for 1900 was 35 per cent, and for 1910 it was 44 per cent (Lowndes, 1956:435-6). And with the closure of the Vancouver-Fiji Sugar Company in 1922, the CSR Company acquired complete monopoly over the processing and the marketing of Fiji sugar, though after 1920, with the abolition of the indenture system and the consequent rise in the number of Indian tenant-farmers and contracters, the company's role as a cane grower diminished rapidly.

The great expansion in output and size of the CSR Company is well reflected in the rate of growth of the Fiji sugar industry itself. In 1901, the total area under sugarcane was only 11,880 hectares;[31] it increased to 26,290 hectares in 1925, to 31,667 hectares in 1930, to 35,506 hectares in 1935, and to 37,079 hectares in 1940.[32] In addition, as table 3.5 shows, there was also a rapid increase in the total volume of sugar exported from Fiji.

The figures presented above leave little doubt as to the direction of economic development in Fiji. The increase in the number and the capacity of the sugar mills of the CSR Company, the continuing increase in the size of the sugar exported, and the growth in the size of the land under sugarcane over the decades, all point to the continuing expansion and prosperity of the Fiji sugar industry. Moreover, since to this day Fiji has basically remained an export-oriented agricultural economy in which sugar has usually provided from 60 to 70 per cent of the total domestic export earnings, the expansion of the sugar industry reflects in considerable measure the expansion of the economy itself.

But, as we have already shown, this great expansion was achieved amidst almost continually low prices and, at least for the first forty years, in the face of fixed wages which were negotiated in 1879, well before the first slump in sugar prices, and even before the arrival of the CSR Company. This expansion, therefore, cannot be explained simply by reference to the market conditions, which were generally unfavourable except for the period 1916 to 1921; nor to the successive

Table 3.5

Sugar Exports of Fiji 1875-1944

Year	Tons	Year	Tons	Year	Tons	Year	Tons
1875	96	1893	15989	1911	72834	1929	87680
1876	265	1894	27265	1912	61728	1930	92857
1877	482	1895	23210	1913	94710	1931	67937
1878	548	1896	26234	1914	92122	1932	131302
1879	785	1897	26991	1915	85563	1933	115985
1880	593	1898	34156	1916	120528	1934	103886
1881	688	1899	28403	1917	97335	1935	131240
1882	1731	1900	32961	1918	63010	1936	148267
1883	5163	1901	31715	1919	64348	1937	140773
1884	8729	1902	35906	1920	72985	1938	134578
1885	10686	1903	46348	1921	72624	1939	114312
1886	11716	1904	52138	1922	71731	1940	118463
1887	12831	1905	56488	1923	44108	1941	136419
1888	16916	1906	38523	1924	58472	1942	139829
1889	13178	1907	66597	1925	96750	1943	68437
1890	15291	1908	66149	1926	56955	1944	63010
1891	20471	1909	60825	1927	72756		
1892	18883	1910	61781	1928	120686		

Source: Deerr, 1949:191

increases in the size of the CSR Company's investments and its efficiency in production, since the increases in both of these were themselves conditional upon increases in company profits; nor to the increase in the size of cheap land under sugarcane, since the price of land was fast increasing and meant increased labour costs; nor even to cheap labour, since wages for plantation labour remained fixed by agreement and therefore they could not be reduced in line with the falling prices, and they were fixed when sugar prices were higher.

Having taken into account all the major factors of production, the only significant way this expansion in the sugar industry could have been achieved was through an increased exploitation of labour. To examine and show whether labour was indeed exploited in order to increase productivity in the face of low and falling prices and fixed wages, we briefly discuss in the following section the changing character of production.

IV Changing Mode of Production

In this section we identify and briefly discuss three distinct modes of production in the context of Fiji's history. Each mode of production displays a distinctly different character from the other, and the transfer from one mode to another occurred wholly within the context of the changes brought about by the advent of imperialism in Fiji since 1800.

1. The Subsistence Mode of Production

For want of more appropriate terms, we call the first of these the subsistence mode of production, which we have already discussed in some detail while describing the indigenous social structure at the beginning of the second chapter.

This mode of production had an unique blend of its own and it was by no means feudal in character. Here the ownership in private property was virtually unknown, and no one was denied access to land, which was the main means of production. The more productive land was collectively owned and the produce from this was collectively consumed. While individual landholding and land use was a common feature, decision as to the right of occupation and use was collectively determined.

As discussed earlier, while some surplus for ceremonial purposes was produced, accumulation of surpluses for private use or gain was neither necessary nor possible. And since land and labour were not treated as commodities, services rendered to chiefs and others were not considered as rent for land used, but rather as service qua service rendered and were expected in return. Moreover, production was only for use value rather than for exchange; even barter as a method of exchange was not common among the Fijian people, for if it was it could not have operated in competition with the institution of 'kerekere', where the surplus or idle goods could be taken, used, and even consumed at the will of the borrower.

While the society was hierarchical, where status by birth and sex determined one's social position, economic inequality was almost unknown. In other words, an unique system of sharing and self-sufficiency in the area of production had persisted in Fiji at the time of imperialist intrusion and continued to persist largely in that form for some decades thereafter.

2. The Plantation Mode of Production 1860 to 1920

(a) Phase One: 1860-1880

The beginning of the plantation mode of production in Fiji can be traced back to about late 1850's and early 1860's when the first attempts to produce export-oriented agricultural commodities began. As we described in the preceding chapter, both the sandlewood and beche-de-mer trades, though they helped to introduce the notion of labour as a commodity, and the notion of wage and price, the influence of these trades did not penetrate deep enough to affect the production and organizational behaviour of the major part of the Fijian population. The bulk of the population continued to practice the subsistence mode of production, even though the political and demographic structures were deeply affected by the introduction of firearms. The volume of surplus produced for traders and their workmen was small, and the size of the native labour used was itself not large. Hence the notion of the production of surplus for exchange remained relatively superficial and undeveloped.

From about 1860 onwards, however, the situation changed dramatically. The exchange of land and labour, even for trade goods, meant the treatment of these two factors as commodities which could be bought and sold. Moreover, among the European settlers the production of agricultural commodities for distant markets, and the imports of both producer and consumer goods, became a dominant feature. In addition, on the cotton plantations of the 1860's, the sugar plantations of the 1870's, and on coconut plantations throughout the period, an increasing number of native and Pacific Island labour (from 1864) was employed. In all cases, some form of wages, usually in trade goods, were paid, either directly to the individual or through their chiefs.

While the relationship between the chiefs and the people they sent to work on the plantations still remained traditional and personal, the relationship between such workers and their white employers remained anything but personal. In other words, with the institution of private ownership in property, the production of surplus for exchange, and the employment of workers for wages, the establishment of the plantation system ushered in a mode of production, distribution and exchange which was far removed and distinctly different in character than the subsistence mode of production which the natives had hitherto practised.

The development in this trend continued after the extension of the colonial rule, though as we have already noted in the preceding chapter, the use of native labour was later diverted to plantations where the natives worked for the colonial government in order to meet their tax obligations. Even here, the surpluses produced for tax in kind were geared to export, but the relationship between the workers and their employers, who were also their chiefs, was generally semi-feudal and personal.

In general, however, even this phase of the plantation mode of production was increasingly capitalist in character. The plantations were privately owned, the production was for exchange, and the profits were privately appropriated. Yet, these characteristics were typical only of the European-owned plantations, and since they constituted only a small part of the total production of the time, and since the bulk of the village production was geared to direct consumption, we can conclude that the influence of the plantation mode of production was still not too significant.

(b) Phase Two: 1880-1920

It is during this second phase that the plantation system in Fiji developed to its peak, creating conditions whereby labour was coerced and exploited to the hilt. To be sure, like the earlier phase, the second phase was characterized by private ownership in property, the plantations were geared to producing export-oriented agricultural commodities, and the surpluses were appropriated in the form of profits. But, in spite of these basic similarities, there were features in the second phase which were either absent or differed in significant respects from the first.

While the total number of plantations had become smaller, the size of each had increased considerably. Also the number of workers employed had increased greatly, the contracts were longer, and the workers were subject to compulsory labour and penal laws. And unlike the native workers who could take shelter in their own land and villages, the Indians had no place to hide and were without a leader to speak on their behalf. If he was ill and absent, or involved in a litigation against his employer, the time lost would reflect in the extension of his contract.

Perhaps the most coercive aspect of the system was the shift from 'time' work to 'task' work, which came into effect only a month after the first group of workers began working for the CSR Company in 1882.[33] Thereafter, task work and over-tasking of the indentured workers bacame an all-pervasive feature of the plantation mode of production.

In essence the indentured worker was neither completely unfree nor completely free. While he did not suffer all the disadvantages of a slave, he neither enjoyed the freedom of the free while serving his contract. But he was unfree only for the first five years and thereafter he could leave for India or stay back and settle in the Colony. About two-thirds chose to stay back.

The indentured worker was subject to extra-economic coercion, and even in his free condition Fiji's land laws meant that he could only lease land from the natives; in practice, even this posed difficulties and, therefore, many were once more forced on the labour market.

Moreover, the relationship between the employer and the employee was highly impersonal, and this feature became even more intense as the size of the plantations and the number of workers on them increased.

Some of the worst features of the plantation system, however, were directly influenced by Fiji's dependence on the external market. This was particularly the case with the sugar market. As we described in the above section, the first slump in the price of sugar was experienced in 1884. At this time, of the 3,995 indentured workers employed in Fiji, 3,814 worked on the sugar plantations and, of these, 1,723 worked on the CSR Company's plantations.[34] Though never a part of the contract, the 'task' work was already in operation since 1882. But with the slump in the sugar price, the employers turned to over-tasking. And since most workers could not complete the so-called six-hour task work even in the usual nine hours, the net result was that employers greatly increased their productivity while at the same time paying proportionately lower wages in respect of uncompleted tasks. Therefore, what was a fixed wage under the contract now became the maximum which a worker could actually earn, and it was mainly this feature, which spread quickly throughout the plantation system, that contributed directly and significantly to the expansion of the Fiji sugar industry until 1920. Yet, as we shall see below, this was the very feature which sounded the death-knell to the plantation system in Fiji.

3. The Capitalist Mode of Production

While the plantation mode of production is a special case or a variant of the capitalist mode of production, there are at least two essential respects in which it differs from the latter. The plantation mode of production involves, on the one hand, the utilization of labour in unfree or semi-free condition and, on the other, the subjection of such labour to extra-economic coercion or exploitation. Moreover, the relationship between the employer and the employee generally remains semi-feudal.

In the case of Fiji, and particularly between 1880 and 1920, labour in semi-free condition was the typical. Such labour was increasingly subject to extra-economic exploitation as evidenced by adverse land and labour laws, the treatment of labourers under the penal laws, the extension of the contract period and imposition of fines in cases where absence from work occurred through illness, litigation, or simply dissertion.[35] But with regard to the relationship between the employer and the employee, and especially after the advent of the indenture system and following the rationalization of the plantation system, the interactions between the two categories became standardized, impersonal, and minimal. The estates and the plantations had become smaller in number but larger in size and there was a corresponding increase in the number of workers employed on each.[36]

But from 1920 onwards, the two major features distinguishing the plantation mode from the capitalist mode of production in general diminished rapidly. Although the ratio of the ex-indentured labour to indentured labour had increased rapidly since 1885 and the trend towards the decentralization and fragmentation of the plantations were already under way for some years, the sudden and almost simultaneous change in both the market and labour conditions in 1916 were perhaps the two key factors underlying the change from one mode of production to the other. The change, however, was gradual.

By 1916 there were already two Commissions of Inquiry into the conditions of the workers under the indenture system in Fiji; there were strikes and labour riots on several plantations and against the colonial government itself;[37] the demand to abolish the 'task' system and to improve the working conditions of the labourers had continued for years; and, finally, there was a mounting pressure from both within Fiji and from the outside, and especially from the Indian nationalists, to do away with the Indian indenture system altogether. As a result, but also because the British imperialists in India wanted men for the army, the Indian indenture system was suspended in 1916, followed by its eventual abolition in January, 1920.

Under the pre-1916 sugar prices, the suspension of the indenture system would have meant only a slight rise in wages to the free workers and, since this was not likely to be acceptable, would have led perhaps to a mass emigration back to India. But the suspension and the consequent shortage of labour, which had already increased the bargaining power of labour, were almost simultaneously accompanied by a sharp rise in the price of sugar in the London market. Largely due to the war-time conditions which had created a shortage of sugar, the London market price rose to a peak of 58/- per cwt. in 1920 (see table 3.4). As a direct consequence of this, the position of the worker was further strengthened, though it is doubtful if the workers were even aware of the rising prices of sugar.

The net result of the suspension of the indenture system and the rising prices of sugar between 1916 and 1920 inclusive was the rapid rise in the number of tenant-farmers and smallholders. By 1922, when the CSR Company acquired a total monopoly in the processing and the marketing of Fiji sugar, its role as sugarcane grower was almost wholly taken over by the ex-indentured workers and their descendants. The change was perhaps the most significant in the labour industry of Fiji - a change which gradually transformed the mode of production itself.

The following section attempts to present in outline the changing relation to the means of production, distribution and exchange from one mode of production to another. More specifically, we examine and discuss class formation, class consciousness and class conflict in Fiji up to the end of the Second World War.

V. Some Consequences of the Changing Relations to the Means of Production

As we have already discussed in the above section, the central feature of any mode of production is the nature of the relationship to the means of production which is peculiar to it and, indeed, which distinguishes that mode from any other. Thus, in the case of the subsistence mode of production we have not only stressed that the main means of production was land, that the institutions governing distribution and exchange were limited by and confined to production for purposes of direct consumption, but we have also pointed out that even the concept of ownership in private property was literally unknown and institutionally discouraged (e.g. through "kerekere"). There was, therefore, a total absence of economic stratification. In other words, in this mode the collective owners of the means of production (land) were also the direct producers and consumers of whatever produced, and any inequality in the distribution of economic resources were taken care of by the institution of "kerekere".

Our basic aim in this section, however, is to examine briefly and assess the extent to which the changes in the relations to the means of production, distribution, and exchange, which came into being as direct consequences of the plantation and, later, the capitalist modes of production, led to reactions resulting in class formation, class consciousness, and class conflict. In our present context, however, the discussion will be necessarily confined to the period 1860 to 1945, leaving further discussion of the subject, especially in respect of the post-Second World War period, to the following chapter.

(a) The Changing Relations to the Means of Production 1860-1945

In Fiji the institutionalization of ownership in private property, which began sometime in the late 1860's when land acquisition for the production of export-oriented commodities commenced, was the first major step towards change in the relations to the means of production, distribution, and exchange. As we have already noted in the preceding chapter, about 10% of Fijian land, including a major portion of some of the best agricultural land in the group, was permanently alienated and handed over to the European planters by the Land Claims Comission of 1875. But the actual acquisition of most of that land had already occurred prior to the direct colonization of Fiji in 1874.

Parallel to this development was the institutionalization of land and labour as commodities and the establishment of wage-relations between European employers and native and other island employees.

By 1880 the relationship between production and consumption was no longer direct but roundabout, with the processes of distribution and exchange increasingly intervening between the two. In other words, the growing dependence on export-oriented agricultural commodities and a corresponding increase in the dependence on imported consumer and producer goods meant that a characteristic which was initially peculiar to the European settler society was now fast spreading to other sections of the population, and especially to those who had become almost wholly dependent on wages.

From 1880 onwards, the growth in private ownership in general and private enterprise in particular, proceeded at a faster pace. It reflected in the growth of larger firms, larger plantations, the alienation and acquisition of more Fijian land (between 1905 and 1908), the growth in the volume and type of exports and imports, and in the increase of the number of workers dependent on wages.

Besides the CSR Company, there were several other Australian-based multinational firms which set their roots in Fiji. The trading firm of Burns Philp, for instance, extended its operations in Fiji in 1880. It bought a coastal shipping line in 1886 and opened a service to Fiji in 1887 (Bolton, 1967). By 1896 it began acquiring local firms in Fiji, as well as acquiring plantation and trading interests in other parts of the Pacific (O'Reilly, 1957:29-30; Scarr, 1967:203; Couper, 1967:69). By 1918 it became one of the largest firms in Fiji, with company branches in most territories in the Western Pacific, and with offices in London and San Francisco.

In a similar fashion, the W.R. Carpenter firm, which had already acquired considerable interests in Papua New Guinea by 1919, spread eastward to Fiji in the 1920's. Its activities included air transport to the New Guinea goldfields in the mid 1930's, shipping, trading, and agency business throughout the Western Pacific. Meanwhile, the Suva-based Morris Hedstrom Limited, which acquired German interests in Tonga and Samoa in 1919, became the fourth largest firm in Fiji. By 1956, however, it was absorbed into the Carpenter group of companies. These three firms became so influential that anyone wishing to go into business or trade in Fiji must deal either with or through them. These firms and their activities in Fiji are discussed in some detail in Chapter V.

But the ownership of property, and of private enterprise in particular, was not to remain for long the prerogative of the European section of Fiji's population. To be sure, they owned the major part of the freehold land, most of the major industries and merchant houses, shipping, and the import and export trades. Nevertheless, despite their dominance in the economic and political fields, there were areas in which other groups could still enter.

From 1885, when first group of Indian indentured workers had completed their five-year contracts, their numbers as free workers was increasing every year, though in the early years of the indenture period about half of them chose to return to India. Moreover, by 1910 there were about 100 "free" Indian immigrants in Fiji; their number increased to between two to three thousand before the close of the indenture system in 1920, though the largest number in this category arrived in the 1920's. In general, it was largely these two categories of Indians, the "free" immigrants and the ex-indentured labourers and their descendants, which gradually made their presence felt in the various spheres of Fiji's economy. An outline of their socio-economic progress up to 1945 is given below.

In 1891 there were 7,988 Indians in Fiji. Of these 4,421 were indentured. By 1901 their total increased to 18,425 and the number of indentured workers was 7,033, and of the 44,220 Indians in 1911, only 14,462 were indentured.[38] These increases in the number of "free" Indians over the indentured workers were accompanied by marked increases in the proportion of Fiji-born to India-born. In 1911 the percentage of Fiji-born was only 27 per cent and by 1921 this figure increased to 44.22 per cent, i.e. of the 60,634 Indians in 1921, 26,810 were Fiji born, while the native population was 84,475.[39]

Although the Indians were intended and wanted as labour force, and they came as such, their penetration of the economic sphere as independent farmers and workers was rapid and significant; their progress was only barred by adverse land and labour laws. Even as early as 1886, 96 Indians were issued with hawker's licenses; they travelled from one town to another selling their wares,[40] though mainly to other Indians and the native Fijians. In 1888, between 14 of them they held 3 acres of land, one acre being freehold and the other two leasehold. With this small beginning, by 1898, the number of landholders increased to 175, with 6,695 acres of which 4,164 were freehold. Ten years later, in 1908, the number of landholders had grown rapidly to 1,688, holding 46,131 acres, including 38,359 acres of leasehold.[41] And by 1911, about three-quarters of the non-indentured Indians had settled on the land as owners or tenants.[42]

This increase in their acquisition of land was accompanied by a rapid increase in their production activities. In 1911 the Indians owned about 32 per cent of cattle in Fiji, and by 1912 the non-indentured Indians grew 6,621 acres of sugarcane, 10,008 acres of rice, 2,503 acres of maize, 2,064 acres of bananas, 559 acres of beans, 100 acres of tobacco, and 141½ acres were devoted to growing other items.[43] Moreover, in Navua, the non-indentured Indians grew and produced more sugarcane than did the European planters of the Fiji Sugar Company.[44] Their share of the total sugarcane grown and produced in the Colony increased rapidly over the years; the European planters were increasingly replaced by Indian tenant-farmers and contractors. By 1930, the CSR Company cultivated only 15,000 acres of cane, its Indian tenant-farmers cultivated 31,000 acres, and further 32,000 acres of cane land was farmed by Indian contractors.

While the position of the Indians underwent a marked change over the decades, from merely a labour force to one of independent farmers and cultivators of cash crops, the economic position of the native Fijian remained somewhat static. Even as late as 1938, only in the mining and copra industries that the participation of Fijians was relatively larger than other groups, but only as labourers and semi-skilled workers or casual workers. In 1938 the number of Fijians employed in the mines was 1,270 or 75.9 per cent of the total labour in that industry; as against 997 Indians, only 59 Fijians were employed in the CSR Company's five sugar mills, and even then only as casual labour during the crushing season. In that year the paternalistic colonial government's annual report described the Fijian economic position as follows:

> "Each Fijian is a member of a land-owning unit, and has the right to use a portion of the tribal lands; he is capable of supporting himself and his family on the products of his lands. There is, therefore, no necessity for him to work for wages, and generally speaking he only does so in order to gain money for some specific object. The majority of Fijians support themselves from the products of their lands, and those who elect to work under contract of service usually return to their villages on the completion of the contract. There is, therefore, no labouring class of Fijians dependent solely upon wages they earn. The constant change in the personnel of the labourers obviates any serious interference with the native social system and helps in preventing the growth of a class of Fijians divorced from tribal associations and dependent for their livelihood on the labour market."45

The above quote helps to illustrate and contrast clearly the socio-economic position of the Fijians, both in relation to other social groups and in terms of the means of production itself. Whereas the Europeans and the Indians made considerable economic progress, the Fijians' participation became largely confined to activities associated with his village obligations; save for permanent employment in the Fijian Administration, he was mainly a casual worker, without skills and without demand. In any event, whereas in 1870's his refusal to work for others was mainly due to his inability to supply labour, in the 1930's he did not work for others not because he was unable to supply labour but rather because his earlier refusal to work was constantly interpreted and translated by the colonial government into a way of life - a way of life which constantly discouraged the development of his skills and initiative, and restricted both his geographical and social mobility. His rising aspirations in the face of a way of life that could not satisfy them necessarily led to frustrations and conflicts. We shall turn to a more detailed discussion of these in the next chapter.

(b) Class Formation, Class Consciousness and Class Conflict

In the preceding discussion we have briefly described some of the more significant changes in the relations to the means of production which followed the shifts from one mode of production to another. More specifically, we have shown that, relative to one another and at least since the 1880's both the Indians and the Europeans made a significant economic advance, while the native Fijians' share in the private sector of the economy remained at best relatively static. However, to state this is not to imply that at intra-community level all or even the majority of the

Europeans or Indians gained equal economic or social advantages and, conversely, nor that all Fijians necessarily and equally suffered economic disadvantages. In other words, there was both inter- and intra-community socio-economic differentiation, largely as a consequence of the changing relations to the means of production. It is to a brief discussion of this process of socio-economic differentiation and, in particular, its consequences in the form of class formation, class consciousness, and class conflict, that the present discussion is devoted.

(i) Class and Race

With the arrival of the Indian indentured labourers in 1879, the conditions necessary for the emergence of a multiracial society in Fiji had set in. In spite of the fact that the Fijians had already embraced Christianity, the socio-economic, political and physical distances between them and the Europeans were as wide as they ever had been. The arrival of the Indians, with a distinctly different culture, strange languages and religions, and with an entirely alien set of manners and habits, added yet another array of new elements to what were already existing.

This diversity in socio-cultural backgrounds became more accentuated and reinforced over time by the political, economic, and geographical relations which, though secondary in character, became further distinguishing features of the three communities. For instance, each of the three communities lived in separate areas, worked under separate conditions and different laws, and generally had distinctly different economic means and economic relations. Under the Native Policy, the Fijians were administered separately, paid their tax in produce, worked in what they called the "government gardens" as well as in their villages. Moreover, since their chiefs acted as spokesmen on their behalf, their interaction with members of other communities remained minimal, save for their contact as contract or casual labourers alongside the Indian workers and mainly under the Europeans, and their chiefs' contacts as the main lessors of land to the Indians.

Similarly, though both the Europeans and the Indians were governed by the central administration directly, at least for the first five years of their stay in Fiji the Indians were merely the employees of the Europeans. However, the fact that most of the Europeans were employers while most of the Indians constituted the bulk of the labour force, meant that the socio-economic and political, and even the physical distances between these two groups were largely a matter of what ethnic or racial group one belonged to. In other words, since in all the three cases the inter-community economic differences were markedly greater than similar differences at the intra-community level, social stratification by race rather than class, at least until the 1920's, became the major determinant and the dominant feature of the socio-economic and political structure of Fiji's society.

At the intra-community level, the economic differences among the Fijians remained negligible almost throughout the period presently under consideration. It was a society wherein only a few chiefs received official positions of influence and high income, though still subordinate to and lower in status than the senior European officials and the leaders of the major industries. Of these, the members of the "Council of Chiefs," as formally constituted under the Native Policy, remained the most dominant single category among the Fijians. The gradual emergence of leadership from among the commoners was still to come, and it was not until the 1940's that they began to play any role of economic significance to the colony.

In the case of Europeans, however, there was considerable economic and social differentiation; the salaried officials of the hierarchically organized colonial government had varying degrees of rank status, authority, income, and privileges, and these features equally characterized the officials of the larger companies, and especially the CSR Company and, later, the European employees of the Burns Philp and Carpenter group of companies. And, of course, the size and income of the plantations were important determinants of status among the planters themselves. Nevertheless, as a group vis-a vis other groups or communities they were one. To them, the members of the Indian and the Fijian communities were at best their subordinates in all essential respects. Therefore, in spite of the considerable internal differentiation by income, authority, privileges and status, they generally maintained an aura of consensus in their behaviour against members of other groups. Ethnic background was therefore more important than economic differences, and these differences were much greater in relation to other communities than internally among themselves.

Like the Fijians, the situation with regard to the Indians was distinctly different than that existing among the Europeans. Initially, they all were indentured labourers, each having no higher income status than the next, without leadership, and with a experience of a journey and work conditions that had lost for them both their caste differences and caste practices. Therefore, both potentially and in practice, this was the community which provided the conditions necessary for economic differentiation leading to class formation within the context of a multi-racial society. The brief discussion that follows, therefore, focuses closely on class formation, class awareness and class conflict among the Indians, though taking account of the broader socio-economic and political context within which they occurred.

(ii) Class Awareness

In the context of the above discussion, it should be noted that what might have been group formation on class line became the formation of communities on racial basis. There were at least five historically interrelated but clearly separable factors which greatly contributed and continually helped to reinforce this developmental trend. First, the type of division of labour which the colonial government practised meant that the Indians, Fijians and the Europeans generally worked separately, often under differing terms and working conditions, and on different projects. In other words, it was essentially a racial division of labour. Second, the existence of a separate Fijian administration helped to minimize the interaction between the Fijians and other communities, thereby both isolating the Fijians and discouraging any development of common interest across cultural boundaries. Third, the sharp rise in the Indian population, at a time when the native population was still on the decline, led to increased apprehension and concern among the Fijian people. Fourth, the Indians could only occasionally buy freehold land from the Europeans and, therefore, since the natives collectively owned almost 85% of the total land area (see Chapter IV), the Indians became heavily dependent on land leased from the Fijians. Fifth, unlike the Fijians who had separate administration and were governed through their leaders, the Indians were leaderless almost throughout the indenture period.

Therefore, all these differences as different ethnic groups, which originated directly from British colonial rule in Fiji, not only discouraged the formation of classes across cultural/racial boundaries, they also helped to keep to the minimum any possibility of class awareness among the subject groups. Indeed, the rapid increase among the Indians as owners of property and enterprise, on the one hand, and the sharp rise in the population on the other, helped to heighten the differences between the main groups and, at least after 1920, the Europeans spared no opportunity in openly contrasting the relative economic progress of the Indians and the Fijian communities.

It is, therefore, in the light of this background that we examine below the nature and character of a series of conflict which occurred in Fiji up to the end of the Second World War.

(iii) Class Conflict

As already discussed above, at first there was little to no economic differentiation among the indentured Indian workers. They had lost their caste practices and, therefore, status differences were hardly significant in their day-to-day relationship among themselves. But it was only a matter of time before economic differentiation occurred. There were a series of factors which emerged over the decades and led to considerable socio-economic differentiation.

First, the plantation owners as well as the colonial government selected 'sardars' (foremen) and clerks from among those who had some literacy, and especially in English. Invariably, those selected were of higher castes who had had the benefit of some education in India. Here, even the ability to speak and understand some English was an important factor.

Second, as we noted above, many Indians acquired land, either they bought freeholds or acquired leaseholds from the natives. Indeed, even during the indenture period many well-to-do Indian farmers had sprung up, with several employing both free and indentured workers, though the exact number of these is not documented.

Third, the importance of the role of the 'free' immigrants mentioned above should not be under-estimated. Besides their activities as traders and shopkeepers, they helped to provide a close link between the immigrant and the political developments in India. In particular, the free immigrants helped to encourage both the labourers' sympathies with the nationalist movements in India and the revival of Hindu and Muslim observances and traditions within Fiji (Gillion, 1962: 130-135; Mayer, 1963: 24-32).

Fourth, there was a growing disparity in economic status between those who had been free and independent farmers for sometime and those who were still working as employees of others, and especially those who were still serving under the indenture.

Fifth, as we have noted above, by 1921 the ratio of Fiji-born to India-born had increased considerably. But the influx of 'free' immigrants to Fiji in the 1920's led to their establishment as traders and merchants. The Fiji-born found it increasingly difficult to enter these areas and in the late 1920's and the 1930's, the Fiji-born increasingly challenged the relative rights of the India-born as opposed to their own.

Yet, despite these internal differences and the growth of religious factions among the Indians, they maintained considerable solidarity in their demands for higher cane prices and higher wages, and they treated the indenture system as a common foe against which they struggled until its abolition in 1920.

In the early decades, the reaction of the Indians was largely against the treatment they received as indentured workers. In February 1886, for instance, there was a strike of 300 Indians on the CSR Company's Navuso estate. In May 1886, 130 Indians marched to the government offices in Suva, carrying knives, axes, hoes and sticks. In both cases their grievances lay in low wages they received and over-tasking, and in both cases the ringleaders were gaoled.[46] This later incident led to the enactment of a labour Ordinance which forbade the gathering together of more than five workers, and provided against the possession of tools or weapons when protesting.[47]

In April of the following year, a further group of 130 Indian workers marched in an orderly fashion from plantations in Nausori to Suva, to complain on low pay and over-tasking. All were prosecuted under the Labour Ordinance of the previous year.[48]

These three incidents were followed by numerous protests, strikes, and even acts of violence and almost always against the white employers, overseers, and Indian 'sardars' throughout the indenture period. To state that these riots and protests were racial in character would be an obvious but superfluous interpretation, and many researchers have easily fallen into this trap (Mayer, 1963; Gillion, 1962). To be sure, they occurred in the context of a multi-racial society, in which social division of labour was such that the economic positions of an oppressed and exploited group tended to coincide with the community or racial boundary of that group. Therefore, the distinction between groups as racial or economic categories was often blurred. Only if we for a moment ignore the racial aspects and consider the exploiter and the exploited as of the same race, such exploitation would have necessarily led to conflicts of the type we have just discussed. In other words, even during the indenture system the Indian's reaction to labour exploitation had an economic basis and, hence, the conflict was essentially a class conflict rather than a race conflict, though one could not rule out the possibility of racial overtones in a colonial society where the economic division of labour necessarily coincided with the racial/cultural boundaries. To illustrate perhaps still more clearly the nature of conflicts during the period under consideration, we cite the strikes of 1920/21 and that of 1943. The first strike began only two weeks after the indentured workers were freed.

On 15th January, 1920, a strike of Public Works Department and Municipal employees began in Suva and quickly spread to the CSR Company's mill at Nausori.[49] It lasted for just over a month, ending on 16th February. The strike was led by an Indian barrister who had been sent to Fiji at the initiative of Gandhi some years earlier to provide leadership to the Indians. The workers were demanding an increase in the daily wage from the existing 2/6d to 5/-. The reason given in support of their demand was that the cost of living during and after the First World War had risen considerably higher relative to the almost static daily wage. They also requested that a Commission of Inquiry be formed to investigate into the rising prices of consumer goods.

Although the colonial government agreed to a Commission, it did not agree to increase their wages. Instead it ordered them back to work on 30th January. The strikers refused and the government used native police and special constables drawn from among the Europeans to break the strike. Enraged by the government's actions, the strikers sabotaged bridges and cut telephone wires between Suva and Nausori. Many police as well as strikers were injured, and on 12th February police used bayonets to disperse the strikers at Nausori. Upon request from the colonial government, on 14th February a New Zealand warship had arrived and waited off the coast at Suva.

On 16th February the strike suddenly ended without the strikers making any economic gains until after the Commission of Inquiry Report was completed. The Commission agreed with the strikers that the prices had indeed risen by 100% since 1910, while during the same period the government employees' daily wage had risen only by 25%, i.e. from 2/- in 1910 to 2/6 in 1919. But despite its findings the Commission recommended that the daily wage should not be increased. Instead, it advocated that food rations worth 4/6 per week be granted. The Indian member of the Commission refused to be a party to the Report, since he advocated that the daily wage be increased to 4/-. Some European members also dissented, saying that efforts should be made to reduce price, rather than increasing the daily wage or granting food rations. What the government workers finally received, however, was a ration allowance of six pence per day or 3/- per week,much lower than the Comission's recommendation of weekly food rations amounting to 4/6. If the Commission had acted on the basis of its own findings, the daily wage would have been increased from 2/6 to at least 4/-.

Meanwhile, amidst the strike at Nausori, on 4th February the CSR Company granted a bonus of 2/6 per ton of cane and a grant of £1 per acre on land properly cultivated with sugarcane. The prevailing daily wage of the company's employees' remained pegged at 1/6, and the voluntary concession was for only one year. It was clear that the company did not want the strike to spread to its four other centres of operation. Moreover, it should also be remembered that the sugar price in the London market in 1920 was the highest (58/- per cwt.) since 1816, when the price range was 49/- to 60/- per cwt.(Deerr, 1950:531), and therefore the CSR Company could not afford to risk a strike, let alone a prolonged strike.

With regard to the CSR Company's concession, the Governor had this to say:

> "It is to be regretted that the concession was not made earlier. If it had been, it is possible that the strike at Nausori, which has been the chief cause of anxiety and expense to the Government, might have been avoided."[50]

Yet, neither the government nor the CSR Company raised the daily wage, and both the government's ration allowance and the company's concession were, if anything, small. In any event, the prevailing daily wage paid by the CSR Company was perhaps the lowest in the Colony, and the workers were therefore discontent and were waiting for the concession period to expire before they struck again.

Indeed, almost exactly a year after the 1920 strike, a strike began by the CSR Company's workers in western Viti Levu. It quickly spread to Labasa, in Vanua Levu. This time the strike was more widespread and lasted six months, but for most of the period it was peaceful and orderly. Once again the strikers demanded an increase in the daily wage, from the existing 1/6 to 5/-, and improved work conditions. The Governor agreed to the Comission of Inquiry requested by the workers, but the CSR Company opposed both the setting up of a Commission of Inquiry as well as its composition. The strike continued and once again the colonial government resorted to force. According to one observer of the scene, the government used the native militia to bread the strike (Brewster, 1922:301). Many strikers still alive feel that the government was utterly unfair in its actions against the strikers. The workers gained only minor concessions from the Company.

Perhaps the next important strike during our period was the one which occurred in 1943. This time the demand came from the sugarcane growers asking for an increase in the price of cane paid by the CSR Company. Whereas both the 1920 and 1921 strikes had leaders[51] behind them, but without the backing of a labour union, the 1943 strike was led by union leaders. In November 1937 the first canegrowers' union, the Kisan Sangh, was formed, followed by the formation of another, the Akhil Fiji Krishak Maha Sangh or the All-Fiji Farmers' Great Association, in June 1941. Since a bill allowing for the formation, registration, regulation and recognition of trade unions was already passed by the Legislative Council in 1941, the two unions were duly registered.

The 1943 conflict in the Fiji sugar industry was a rather complex series of events and therefore only some of the more important features are presented here. The dispute itself began on 11th March 1943 when the Kisan Sangh made a written submission to the CSR Company, seeking an increase in the price of cane from its prevailing price of 21/- to 30/- per ton of cane. This price of 21/- per ton of cane meant that the CSR Company paid as cane price to the farmers no more than 50% of the total sugar proceeds it received from the British Ministry of Food,[52] less the cost of sugar production. In other words, though it came to light much later,[53] the farmers were in effect receiving 50% of the net proceeds from the sale of sugar. Moreover, a ten-year agreement was already made with the British Ministry of Food in 1940. Therefore, within Fiji only the CSR Company could be pressed or persuaded to increase the price of cane paid to the farmers.

The CSR Company's reply to the Kisan Sangh on 31st May, almost three months after the union's submission, stated that the company was unable to increase the cane price. And in response to the union's deputation about two months earlier, on 16th June the government replied that it would take up the matter with London, though it would not say when this would be done.[54]

Meanwhile, the harvest time was coming closer and the two unions were getting anxious. The Maha Sangh warned the government that if no settlement was in sight soon enough, almost all the cane growers would refuse to cut their cane. The CSR Company's lack of any positive response, however, prompted the Kisan Sangh to ask the government for a Commission of Inquiry, since the Ministry of Food in London would also be bound by its recommendations, while only the company and the cane growers would be bound by a Court of Arbitration.

But the Commission's procedure was slow and cumbersome, and frustrating to the unions. At first they boycotted it, and asked for an arbitration, which the government refused. As a result, the unions came out on strike and the Viti Levu cane growers refused to harvest their cane, though this was not the case in Vanua Levu. The government offered police and military protection to those who wanted to have their cane cut. But this attempt to break the strike was unsuccessful, since direct intimidation and the cane burning soon put an end to such efforts. Even when the government made a few arrests, the prosecution failed, since the cane growers were under no legal obligation to cut their cane. And as to be expected, the government acted quickly and passed new regulations declaring cane as an essential crop for the Colony, thus making the strike illegal. Moreover, the leaders of the Maha Sangh, including the late A.D. Patel and Swami Rudranand, were put under house arrest, and no meetings were permitted in the strike areas.

A reconstituted Comission began hearing in August and produced a brief report in November. It came out against the canegrowers, stating that an increase in cane price was unjustified and unwarranted. Whereupon the unions asked for a Royal Commission, and failing this, they requested that a deputation be sent to London. Their requests were refused, though two years later, in May 1944, the government did cause an inquiry to be made into the 1943 cane growers' strike.

It is interesting to note that as a direct result of the 1943 strike,Fiji's sugar exports for 1943 and 1944 were reduced to 68,437 and 63,010 tons respectively as compared to the 1942 figure of 139,829 tons (Deerr, 1949:191).

In general, however, it should be noted that the three strikes which we have discussed immediately above were distinctly different in character than those which occurred in the pre-1920 period, that is, during the indenture period. During the indenture period the workers were generally without a leader, bound individually by contracts, and they were without a bargaining power and being in their semi-free condition, they had no alternative to turn to. Their reactions against harsh and exacting working conditions and low pay were registered simply through complaints, protests and, at times, through riots and violence against the oppressers.

In contrast, the 1920 strike, and especially the 1921 strike, were well organized, and they clearly demonstrate the growing power of the workers in free condition. They could hold on their own for long periods without pay, and even in the face of considerable government repression. Though they did not have trade unions, they had capable leaders. And even when their leaders were barred from participation or deported, the strike could continue, as the 1921 strike did. It demonstrated considerable determination, solidarity and a strong sense of purpose among the workers. Indeed, it was a new era in the labour history of Fiji.

Both in 1920 and 1921, as our discussion has shown, the workers' claims were based on sound economic grounds, and they chose very opportune moments in world history to strike against capitalist domination and oppression. This equally applies to the 1943 cane growers' strike. The war-periods were times when both the imperial and the colonial governments were at their weakest, and when labour revolts were most effective. But in a multi-racial/multi-cultural colonial society, where "divide and rule" was the main policy of the colonial administration, the development of class awareness and organized efforts of the oppressed classes were easily diluted and often brought to naught, as evidenced by the results of the 1943 strike.

Yet, as we shall show in Chapter VI, the developments in Fiji's economy and society up to the end of the Second World War marked a major turning point in Fiji's history generally, and in Fiji's labour history in particular.

VI Conclusions:

In this chapter we have attempted to show how the first phase of imperialism in Fiji brought about far-reaching changes in the second. More specifically, we have shown the changing mode of production, from an essentially indigenous subsistence mode of production to an essentially capitalist mode of production, with the consequent changes in the relations to the means of production, distribution, and exchange and class formation, class consciousness, and class conflicts that followed therefrom.

And as we have clearly shown, it was the earlier imperialistic activities,and the internal conditions and external relations that it created, which gave the subsequent content and direction to Fiji's economy and society. In particular, Fiji's increasing incorporation into and dependence upon the international economy and the subsequent ups and downs of the world commodity markets, together with the shortage of native labour, that led to the introduction of large-scale capital and labour from the outside. And it was the actualization of the potentials inherent in these two factors, along with land use and market conditions, that eventually gave birth to Fiji as a fully-fledged capitalist satellite society - a society which has since remained socially, economically, and politically subordinated to the dictates of the metropolis.

Notes and References

1. This refers to the pre-colonial government formed by the European settlers under the nominal headship of Ratu Cakobau, the Chief of Bau, a small island just off the east coast of the main island of Viti Levu. As Legge points out, "Cakobau, during the 'forties and 'fifties, went so far as to take unto himself the title of Tui Viti, King of Fiji, an act in itself significant of the growing size of political groupings. His claim, of course, had no basis in tradition, and his suzerainty was not even nominally recognized beyond the area in which he was strong enough to compel obedience" (1958:12)

2. Fiji Times, 13th December, 1871.

3. From 1850 to 1883 the average price of raw sugar in London fluctuated between a low of 19/- ~~and a~~ high of 25/6 (in 1871), and almost twice as high as those for the period 1884 to 1914 (Table 3.4).

4. After the collapse of the cotton market the planters experimented with several crops, including coffee and tropical fruits, but these failed. Many returned to producing copra. Sugar production appeared the most attractive, but the planters lacked capital.

5. As it will become clear later, it was largely for this reason that the colonial government had to look elsewhere than to the planters for most of its revenue.

6. Three years were generally the maximum period of contracts; shorter periods of contracts were more usual in the case of Fijian labourers. Longer contracts of three to five years were usual in respect of labourers from other Pacific Islands; the usual payment was £2 to £3 per annum (Parnaby, 1972:129).

7. Thurston to Des Voeux, 25 November, 1878; 'Labour in Fiji' (Confidential print, July 1879), Colonial Office 808/36.

8. Wilkinson to Gordon, 16th June, 1876.

9. The measles epidemic, which struck Fiji in the early months of 1875, was a disaster for the Fijians. The estimate of the number died varies from about 20,000 to 40,000.

10. 'Kai Colos' (Mountain Tribes) in the interior of the main island were hostile even to what the colonial government described as 'peaceful' penetration of the interior. The Kai Colos attacked several Christian villages in April, 1876. The rebels were executed; Gordon to Carnarvon, 1st July, 1876.

11. Gordon to Legislative Council, 21st December, 1876.

12. Fiji Labour Ordinance XV of 1876, and Labour Ordinance X of 1877.

13. Gordon to Legislative Council, 31st December, 1875.

14. Neither the government nor the Fijians had any objection to the employment of 'local' labour, i.e. Fijian labourers working as casual labourers for periods not exceeding a month and going out to work only short distances away. But the planters preferred labour tied down by contract, and working at distances from where they could not easily escape to their villages (Des Voeux to Colonial Office. Despatch No. 30, 3 March, 1879).

15. Gordon to Gladstone, 22nd March, 1876; in Knaplund (ed): 'Gladstone-Gordon Correspondence' Trans. Amer. Phil. Soc., Vol. 51, Pt. 4, 1961, p. 66.

16. Draft Despatch, Gordon to Colonial Office, June-August, 1876, Stanmore Papers, British Museum 49199.

17. Carnarvon to Gordon, 10th February, 1876; C.1624 of 1876.

18. Herbert to Gordon, 9th June, 1876, Stanmore Papers, British Museum 49199.

19. The actual revenue increased from £16,433 in 1875; £37,437 in 1876; £46,688 in 1877; to £61,021 in 1878. Revenue from natives was £9,343 in 1876; £15,103 in 1877; and £18,178 in 1878. Exports of entirely native produced copra increased from £25,306 in 1876 (1,533 tons) to £79,699 in 1877 (6,311 tons); (Legge, 1958: 237 and 272).

20. A detailed account of the settlers' attack, and their implications for the colonial government and its reactions, are given in Legge, 1958:247-269.

21. Title to 414,615 acres of the best land in the Colony was granted, out of a total area of 4,581,500 acres which makes up Fiji.

22. Fiji Times, 19th May, 1877.

23. Speech to settlers at Nasova, Fiji. Enclosed in Gordon to Carnarvon, 9th September, 1875.

24. Gordon to Gladstone, 22nd March, 1876; in Knaplund (ed) 'Gladstone-Gordon Correspondence' Trans. Amer. Phil. Soc., Vol. 51, Pt. 4, 1961, pp. 66-67.

25. In 1877 the Legislative Council of Fiji authorized £5,000 from the General Revenues of the Colony towards the introduction of 1,000 Polynesian labourers; Ordinance XXIV of 1876 provided for the conveyance and recruiting of labourers.

26. Gordon to the Sanderson Committee on Indian Emigration, Command 5193 (1910), p.348.

27. Gordon to the Colonial Office, Despatch No.121, 9th August, 1877.

28. C.S.O. 531/1975; Fiji Times, 4th September, 1875.

29. Colonial Office to Governor Gordon, Despatch No.120, 14th November, 1877.

30. The last indentured workers in Fiji were released on 1st January, 1920. Under the Defence of India Act 1917, all recruiting for the colonies ceased on 12th March 1917 (Gandhi, M.K. An Autobiography, 2nd edition, Ahmedabad, 1948 p. 489).

31. One hectare=2.471 acres.

32. Fiji Department of Agriculture Annual Reports. Also R.G. Ward, 1965; Burns, Watson and Peacock, 1960.

33. Fiji Report on Indian Immigrations (F.R.I.I.) 1882.

34. F.R.I.I./1884.

35. During a 7-year period, from 1907 to 1913, there were 615 disserters, of whom 522 were recaptured. Fiji Times, 1 April, 1915.

36. By 1910, the size of a typical plantation was about 600 to 1,000 acres, employing about 60 to 150 Indian workers. Under Labour Ordinance VI of 1907, workers could be transferred to work for other employers.

37. These aspects will be dealt with in some detail in the final section of this chapter.

38. F.R.I.I. 1891, 1901 and 1911 (i.e. C.P. 20/1892, 20/1902, 48/1912).

39. Census Report, 1921 (C.P. 2/1922).

40. C.S.O. 1731/1887.

41. Major to Colonial Office, despatch No. 62, 19th April, 1909.

Chapter Four

The Development of Uneven Development: the Internal Factor

I Introduction:

Like most societies of our time, Fiji's society is characterized by uneven development. The unevenness of this development is clearly reflected not only in the unequal nature of her socio-economic resource distribution, but also in the inequality of access to resources which this differential resource distribution continually creates, perpetuates, and feeds on, thus giving to itself a continuity in change and direction. However, the social phenomena we are referring to are by no means static: the development of uneven development, and the inequalities in resource distribution and access to resources are consequences of a process which has built into itself a momentum of its own.

The basic aim of the present chapter is therefore to examine and explain in historical reference the forces which gave rise to this development of uneven development in general, and to the inequalities in distribution of and access to resources in particular. More specifically, it will be seen that racial inequalities are more apparent than real; that underlying racial inequalities are class inequalities, with the differences within each racial group being greater than those between them.

There are two sections to this chapter. The first section is basically concerned with providing a general description of the nature of resource distribution among the various socio-economic and ethnic groups in Fiji during the post-war period, ending with her formal independence from Britain in 1970. The second section attempts to explain in historical reference how this inequality in resource distribution among the various groups has come into being. More specifically, it attempts to show that the post-war inequality in resource distribution was generated through an interplay of several historical conditions, including the introduction of and domination by alien modes of production, distribution, and exchange, the colonial method of native administration, and the colonial division of labour by ethnic origin. These led to relative exposure of certain groups and isolation of certain others, and the consequent emergence of differential participation in the dominant productive and distributive processes. Moreover, the second section also attempts to show not only that racial pluralism and racial inequality in resource distribution were creations of colonialism, but also that class interests rather than racial interests have always been the motive forces underlying such divisions, inequalities, and the general development of uneven development which characterized Fiji's post-war colonial social structure.

II The Nature of Post-War Resource Distribution in Fiji

The present section attempts to describe in outline how some of the key socio-economic resources were distributed among the different socio-economic and ethnic/racial groups in Fiji during the post-war colonial period. Obviously the resources which determine the level of socio-economic progress and social well-being of societal members are those which directly or indirectly affect their life chances and life styles, and especially those which affect the basic necessities of life, i.e. food, clothing, and shelter. As in most societies, in Fiji these resources include land, property, income, occupation, and education, as well as many others of lesser significance. It is to a discussion of the nature of the distribution of these resources in post-war Fiji that we now turn.

1. Land Distribution

By far the most valuable resource in any society is land, but in an island society like Fiji, almost wholly dependent on agriculture, the value of land is still more significant. Of the 7,083 square miles which make up the total area of Fiji, about 7,054 square miles or 4,514,438 acres are accounted for under various forms of ownership. It is the manner in which land is held, and the rights of access and benefits which accrue therefrom, that constitute one significant feature of differential resource distribution in Fiji - a feature which has been largely brought about by the Colonial Policy that we have discussed in the previous chapter.

A general picture of how land was distributed by racial ownership in 1956 is illustrated in table 4.1. Though it clearly shows the

Table 4.1

Distribution of Land

Form of Ownership	Population in 1956	% of total Pop. of Colony	Area of land owned in acres	% of total area of Colony
1. Crown Land				
Freehold	---	---	85,424	1.9
Schedule A	---	---	120,000	2.6
Schedule B	---	---	88,000	1.9
2. Freehold				
a. Colonial Sugar Refining Co.	---	---	75,091	1.7*
b. Europeans and Part Europeans ...	14,212	4	246,242	5.5
c. Indians	169,403	49	75,830	1.7
d. Chinese	4,155	1.2	5,081	0.1
e. Banabans ......)	5,320	1.5	16,950	0.4
f. Ellice Islanders)			4,600	0.1
g. Fijians	---	---	7,532	0.2 **
h. Other Races	91	0.03	2,688	0.06
3. Native Customary Tenure				
a. Fijians	148,134	43	3,776,000	83.6
b. Rotumans	4,422	1.3	11,000	0.24
	345,737	100.0	4,514,438	100.0

Source: Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Natural Resources and Population Trends of the Colony of Fiji, 1959 (Council Paper No.1 of 1960)... By Alan Burns, T.Y.Watson, and A.T. Peacock, p.19

* Major portion leased to cane farmers, mostly Indians.

** These are registered titles as opposed to Native Tenure.

racial disparity in land-holding, it does not tell us much about the nature of land distribution within any one of these categories. Nevertheless, as the table clearly illustrates, racial disparity in land distribution was considerable. About 49 per cent of Fiji's population (Indians) held only 1.7 per cent of land, which was hardly more than what was held by one multinational corporation in Fiji (the CSR Co.). At the other extreme, some 4 per cent of the population (Europeans) held 5.5 per cent, and if the wholly European-owned CSR Company's share is also included, this figure was 7.2 per cent of Fiji's land area; while some 43 per cent of the population (Fijians) held about 83.6 per cent, and 83.8 per cent if we include the Fijian freeholders.

The sharpness of the disparity in land distribution to the Indians is somewhat offset by the fact that over the decades they were able to acquire leases from other groups, and mainly from the natives. In 1959 they held leases totalling 350,000 acres, of which 222,000 acres were in the cane belts, and 128,000 acres elsewhere. Of this, about 230,000 acres were leased from the Fijians.[1] Therefore, the area at the disposal of the Indians was 425,830 acres or about 9.5 per cent of the total area.

Perhaps of still greater significance is the racial disparity displayed by the distribution of acreages under crops. In 1958 the total area under various crops[2] was 378,993 acres and the total population fully occupied on farms was 52,550.[3] The Indians (23,000) utilized 160,218 acres, the Fijians (28,000) 134,004 acres, the Europeans and

Part-Europeans (600) 78,711 acres, and the Chinese and others (1950) the remaining 6,060 acres,[4] the national average being 7.21 acres per capita fulltime farm population.[5] The average per capita acres under crops by each racial group on the farms were 7.0 acres for Indians, 4.8 acres for Fijians, 6.4 acres for Chinese (and other islanders), and 131.0 acres for Europeans (and Part-Europeans). In other words, the European and Part-European farm population, which constituted only 1.1% of the total farm population, held ownership right over at least 20.77% of the total acreage under crops in Fiji in 1958! And if we include the wholly European-owned 36,000 acres of improved pasture land and 600 acres of fodder crops, their average per capita area in use was over 192 acres or 27.7% of the total farmed land in Fiji !

The 1968 Agricultural Census gives more detailed information on Fiji's agricultural landholders, though only by race and size of holdings. According to this census, there were 33,521 holders in 1968, occupying a total of 606,222 acres of land, of which 361,693 acres were used for crop growing (a reduction of about 17,000 acres against the 1958 figure), and 91,510 acres were used as pasture land (an increase of about 55,000 acres against the 1958 figure), reflecting a net increase of some 38,000 acres in the total area under use.[6]

Of the 33,521 holders, 17,339 were Fijians (52%), 15,094 were Indians (45%), and 1,088 were others (3%).[7] While the mean area under cultivation per holder was 10.8 acres, and including the pasture land this figure was 13.5 acres, the mean area of the total land held as holdings was 18.1 acres per holder.[8] Yet, when we examine these figures in terms of the actual size of the holdings, 39% of the holdings were only 0-5 acres, while only 5 per cent of the holders had farms exceeding 50 acres in size, showing that the national average figure of 18.1 acres per holders was almost meaningless.

Moreover, further analysis of these figures in terms of the number and size of holdings by race shows that 55% of the Fijian holders, who constituted 52% of the total holders, held holdings which were only 0-5 acres in size, whereas 43% of the Indian holders held 11-25 acre holdings and 41% of the European, Part-European and Chinese holders had holdings of over 50 acres in size.[9] In other words, the 1968 disparity in landholding by race and size showed a very similar pattern as that already described above in respect of the 1958 crop acreage.

But as with resource distribution by racial categories in general, figures for land distribution, land utilization, and rent benefits by racial groups tend to obscure rather than expose the kind of socio-economic inequalities which arise therefrom, both within a capitalist society as a whole and within each of its racial segments. It is for this reason that we briefly illustrate below the nature of some of the more significant disparities which came into existence within each of the major racial components of Fiji's population living in the agricultural sector.

As already shown in table 4.1 above, the Fijians hold some 83.6% of Fiji's total area under native land tenure system. This, however, does not imply that all sections of the native population have equal access or share in such land, nor does it imply that they derive equal benefits from the rents received in respects of the leased lands. Indeed, inequality of access to land, inequality in the size of holdings, and inequality in the distribution of benefits derived from the leasing of such land, are perhaps three of the most glaring disparities within the Fijian population.

Since the beginning of the colonial rule, the mataqali class (or the traditional native land-owning units) have also been the officially recognized native land-holding units. In 1968, there were just over 6,600 such units holding the entire native land under the so-called native customary tenure.[10] Initially, the size of the mataqali and the total area held by each varied considerably. But though unequal in size, the holding of any one mataqali remained constant in size over the decades, while the membership and the size of the mataqali units have been changing rapidly over the same period, largely due to the excess of death over birth until about 1920, and vice-versa in the more recent decades. As a result, there are numerous mataqali which have only small areas of land for their members, while numerous others have much more land at their disposal than they actually need.

To illustrate this point further, table 4.2 shows the results of a study on native land distribution at Draubuta, in Nakelo Tikina (district), in the Tailevu Province (S.E. Viti Levu).

This study shows that the 14 mataqali (land-holding units) studied

Table 4.2

An Example of Land Distribution by Mataqali in the Tailevu Province*

		Persons	Acreage	Acres per head
Yavusa Naibatisuli:				
Mataqali	1	6	34	5.6
	2	2	22	11.0
	3	42	73	1.7
	4	10	62	6.2
	5	22	18	0.9
	6	1	18	18.0
	7	16	27	1.7
		99	254	2.5
Yavusa Nalecava:				
Mataqali	8	32	14	0.4
	9	7	23	3.3
	10	6	37	6.2
	11	1	18	18.0
		46	92	2.0
Yavusa Burenivalu:				
Mataqali	12	6	19	3.2
	13	24	8	0.3
	14	5	10	2.0
		35	37	1.0
		180	383	2.13

Source: The Fijian People: Economic Problems and Prospects(Council Paper No. 13 of 1959) A Report by O.H.K. Spate, Suva: Government Press, 1959,p.12

* This study in land distribution among the Fijian people was carried out by Rusiate Nayacakalou in 1953

had 180 members with a total of 383 acres, an average of 2.13 acres per person. Though the average acreage was itself low, the figure was highly unrealistic. At one extreme, 2 units had one member each, with each having 18 acres for use. At the other extreme, mataqali 13 had 24 members, with a total of 8 acres, and an average of 0.3 acre per person. Moreover, mataqali 3,5,8, and 13 together had 66% of the people of the 14 mataqali studied, but only 30% of the land.

It is therefore not surprising that in 1968 about 55% of the land holders among the Fijians had between 0-5 acre holding each, and that only 59% of the native holders were using their mataqali land, while a further 27% had to lease land through the Crown and the Native Land Trust Board (N.L.T.B.).[11]

In a similar fashion, the distribution of rents derived from leased lands is most inequitous, both between different land-holding units (mataqali) and within any one of them. It is therefore clear that only the units with more than enough land for their members would be prepared to offer leases through the NLTB. The NLTB, which was set up in 1940 to administer native land, deducts the first 25% of the rent proceeds as fees in lieu of administration costs. The head of the Vanua (district) or Turagi-i-Taukei takes the next 5% of all rents derived from his area; the heads of the Yavusa, of which the mataqali are sub-units, deduct the next 10% of the rents before the proceeds reach the heads of the land-holding units (the turaga-i-mataqali) who deduct the next 15% of the total proceeds. Finally, the remaining 45% is shared between the rank-and-file of the Fijian social hierarchy.

In any event, the rent proceeds in any one year are much too small to be economically significant to the average Fijian. For instance, the 1958 native land rents for all Fiji was only £123,198.13s.4d. The NLTB deducted 25% or £30,799.13s.4d., leaving a balance of £92,399 to be shared among the Fijian people. Given the native population of 148,132 in 1958, the average rent per Fijian was a mere £0.62.[12] But the Fijian chiefs deducted the next 30% or £36,959.12s.0d., which left the fianl balance of 45% or £55,439.8s.0d to be shared amongst the rest of the mataqali members. On this basis the average share of the common Fijian was more like 7.5 shillings than about 12 shillings stated above, the actual range being from 9½d. in Kadavu to £4.10s.0d. in Nadi.[13] But since land is very unevenly distributed among the mataqali, only the units with much more land than they can actually utilize reap the greatest benefit from such distribution. In general, therefore, the differences between being a rich or a poor Fijian correspond directly to the differences between being a chief or a land-owning class on the one hand, and being a commoner or a landless class on the other - and such correspondence is entirely unrelated to effort.

In the case of the Indians, we have already cited (table 4.1) that as a group comprising 49% of Fiji's population in 1958, they held only 1.7% of the total land area. For the rest of the land they use, they are almost entirely dependent on leased lands. Indeed, between the European freeholders and the Fijian land-owning mataqali, the Indians are mostly tenants or sub-tenants.

The figures for 1968, for instance, show that while some 39% of the Fijian holders were dependent on land leased from others, some 89% of the Indian agricultural land holders were in that category. Of the total number of Indian holders (15,094), who constituted 45% of all holders (33,521), only 11% held ownership title of the land they cultivated, while 49% leased land from the Crown or the NLTB, while 25% from the CSR Company, and 15% from other freeholders.[14]

This excessive dependence of the Indian holders on lands owned by the Fijians and the Europeans, however, has considerable bearing on the nature of disparity in land distribution among the Indians. In 1940, for instance, the Native Land Ordinance of that year made provisions that certain portion of native lands, including a large portion of those already leased to Indians, would be proclaimed as "Native Reserves" for the future use of the natives. The area which would be eventually brought under 'reserve' still remains unspecified. In 1949, however, a notice in the Fiji Royal Gazette stated that some 186,327 acres, including the whole of the Ba Province, would be brought under 'reserve' upon the expiry of the leases.

In 1968, the Province of Ba, the largest in Fiji, had 8,617 or 25.7% of all agricultural land holders in Fiji.[15] Of this, the Indian holders were 6,413 or 74%, the majority being entirely dependent on land leased through the NLTB. However, since the Native Land Reserve Policy has come into effect a large number of Indian holders in this province have lost their holdings, or have been living as tenants-at-will, in which case they could be evicted at the discretion of the

NLTB at any time and without any compensation.

Therefore, the situation within the Indian agricultural group as a whole has been one of increasing disparity between the few freeholders and other land holders who are becoming increasingly insecure due to the native reserve policy since the 1940's. Between 1958 and 1968, for instance, while there was a net addition of 38,000 acres to lands which were already being utilized, the acreage under crops had suffered a net reduction by 17,000 acres, largely because a portion of crop acreage held by Indians had reverted to 'reserves' and were accounted for as pasture land.

The main effect of this trend was that the existing economic disparities between Indian freeholders, the holders whose leases were about to expire, those who were barely making a living out of tenancies-at-will, and those who were already evicted or landless, were becoming continually magnified.

In one important respect, therefore, the nature of inequality in land distribution existing within the Fijian and the Indian segments of the population presents a marked contrast. While the _mataqali_ lands are unequally distributed, the size of each _mataqali_ land has remained constant, though the size of the _mataqali_ membership itself has been changing over time, largely due to the growth in population. In the case of the Indians, there has also been a gross inequality in land distribution, but such inequality is being further accentuated by land reduction in an absolute sense, as well as in proportion to the population (table 4.3) which has been rising rapidly since the 1920's.

Table 4.3

Population of Fiji by Race

1921-1970

Year	Fijian %	Indian %	European and Part European %	Others %	Total (000)
1921 Census (24. 4.21)	54	39	4	4	127
1936 Census (26. 4.36)	50	43	4	3	198
1946 Census (2.10.46)	45	46	4	4	260
1956 Census (26. 9.56)	43	49	4	4	345
1966 Census (12. 9.66)	42	51	4	4	477
Mid 1967 Estimate	42	51	3	3	485
End 1967 Estimate	43	51	3	3	491
Mid 1968 Estimate	43	51	3	4	495
End 1968 Estimate	43	51	3	4	502
Mid 1969 Estimate	43	51	3	4	506
End 1969 Estimate	43	51	3	4	514
Mid 1970 Estimate	43	51	3	4	520

Source: Current Economic Statistics, October, 1974

From this it should be amply clear that though there is considerable racial disparity in land distribution, the majority of Indians and Fijians in the rural areas are in a similar situation. They are either landless, or suffer from insecure tenancies and all the ills that they entail. A similar situation exists in the areas of education, occupation and income that we now discuss below.

2. Education, Occupation, and Income Distribution

Manual work, low income, and little to no education were a common feature of any colonial society, and Fiji was no exception to this. But to state this is not to imply that such resources were equally distributed amongst the societal members, between racial groups, or even within any one of them. On the contrary, as it will be shown below, inequality in the distribution of these resources was considerable. And while at the inter-racial level the Europeans had the most of everything, the majority of the Fijians had hardly the necessary minimum.

After the end of the Second World War, however, there was a marked change in this trend. While the inequality between the races became still more entrenched, such inequality was also becoming a common feature at the intra-racial level. Diversity in skill, education, occupation and consequently in income, was becoming increasingly visible, and therefore, at least in the objective sense, the stage was set for stratification on class lines.

In the remaining part of this section, therefore, our basic aim is to present in outline the nature of some of the key disparities in education, occupation, and income in Fiji during the post-war years. In each instance, these disparities are presented at three levels; with reference to Fiji's population as a whole, at inter-racial level, and at intra-racial level.

(a) Education

Throughout the entire British colonial rule in Fiji, and in spite of the growing public pressure for free and compulsory education, access to basic primary and secondary education remained largely dependent on socio-economic and political status of parents. The Education Ordinance of 1916, which for the first time established a Department of Education and a Board of Education, was repealed and replaced by the Education Ordinance No.1 of 1929.[16]

Under both these ordinances the Board of Education was given wide powers. For instance, under Ordinance No.1 of 1929, the Board controlled the registration and classification of schools and teachers, the instructions to be given, the standards to be maintained, and the qualifications and number of teachers required for various grades of schools.

In our context, perhaps one of the most relevant factors was the Board's power to determine and direct certain schools to be registered for the education of children of a particular race. As a result, a series of exclusively European, Fijian,Chinese, and Indian schools had sprung up in the decades preceding the Second World War, and they continued to be organized on racial lines throughout the colonial period.

In 1938, for example, there were 442 schools, of which 16 were for children coming exclusively from European and Part-European origin, 346 were for Fijians, and only 80 were for Indians. During that year the population of Fiji was 210,518. Of this, only 4.30% were Europeans and Part-Europeans, 48.11% were Fijians, and 43.04% were Indians. The number of children attending school included 1,622 from

European and Part-European homes, 19,580 from Fijians homes, and only 7,968 from Indian homes. In other words, expressed as proportions of each racial category, about 17.9% of European and Part-Europeans were at school, while similar figures for Fijians was 10.7% and that for Indians was only 6.1%.

If the availability of schools expressed one important factor in racial inequality, the disparity in facilities available between schools attended by children of different racial groups was another. Of the 16 European schools, four were government schools, five were controlled by the CSR Company, four were run by Christian Missionaries, and three by local European committees. In these schools, books and stationery were supplied at cost price, and except in three government schools in Suva and Levuka where generally no fee was charged for primary classes, the annual fees were ₤2.2.0d. per child in the primary classes and ₤7.10s.0d. per child in secondary classes. Moreover, where two or more children from one family attended, all fees were reduced by one-third.

In addition, the standard of instruction in these schools were the same as that prescribed in New Zealand, all were staffed by qualified teachers recruited from abroad, but mainly from New Zealand, and all were eligible for government grants-in-aid.

The facilities and opportunities provided for the education of children of other races, however, contrasted greatly with those outlined above. In the case of the Fijians, for example, while almost every child had access to primary education, out of the 346 schools, only 144 were eligible for government grants-in-aid, since the rest were sub-standard largely due to a general lack of certificated teachers. Only 7 were government schools, and only one had a secondary department, where the fee paid was £6 per year and the number of pupils enrolled in 1938 was 84.

In 1938, the facilities available for the education of Indian children presented the greatest contrast. Of the 80 schools in 1938, seven were government schools, and 66 were eligible for grants-in-aid. Only one of the schools had a secondary section, and a few Indian pupils could proceed to the Marist Brothers' Secondary School in Suva. It is estimated that in 1938 at least two-thirds of the Indian children between the ages of 6 to 14, about 15,000, were not attending school. For them, schools were simply not available.

With this brief background of the nature of inequality in education during the pre-war years, we describe in outline the extent of inequality in education in the post-war period. In general, it will be seen that in the 1940's and the 1950's the situation had not changed significantly except perhaps for the increase in the proportion of Indians and Fijians attending school.

In 1947, for instance, Fiji's population had increased from 210,518 in 1938 to 269,274. Of these, the Fijians made up 45%, the Indians 47%, the Europeans 2%, Part-Europeans 2.35%, the Chinese 0.75% and other Pacific races 2.9%. The school roll had increased from 29,323 in 1938 to 45,811 in 1947, including 474 in secondary schools and 237 attending the local teachers' training courses.

Of the total number of children attending school, 25,800 were Fijians and 17,792 were Indians. In other words, in marked contrast to the figures given for 1938, in 1947 the proportion of Fijian population attending school had increased to 21.3%, and similar figure for the Indian population had risen to 14.2%. Nevertheless, despite this increase in proportion as well as in absolute numbers of Indians and Fijians attending school, Fiji's annual report shows that at least 13,000 school-age Indian children were still deprived of eduction. Perhaps a figure in the order of 20,000 might have been nearer the mark.

Moreover, while government's gross expenditure had increased from £59,000 in 1938 to £184,428 in 1947, racial disparity in government's net expenditure on education still remained considerable. For instance, while the government's net expenditure per pupil on the roll in 1947 was £3.10s.5d., similar figure for the European pupil was £7.9s.7d., for the Indian pupil £3.18s.2d., and only £2.19s.0d. for the Fijian pupil.

By 1957, however, the number of pupils on the school roll had increased to 69,125 or 19.1% of the total population, of which 65,645 were in the primary schools and 3,480 were in the secondary schools. They included 38,880 males and 30,245 females. Moreover, the total number of school had increased to 540, including 326 Fijian schools, 155 Indian schools, 32 mixed schools, 25 European schools, and 2 Chinese schools.

Yet, despite this large increase in both the number and the proportion of Fiji's population attending school, the system of education was still characterized by considerable disparities both between and within racial groups. For instance, according to the 1956 Census, while some 8% of the school-age Fijian children were still not attending school, similar figure for the Indian children of 6 to 14 years age was about 30% or 14,000. This was largely due to a general lack of school places, and less because of the unwillingness on the part of the parents to send children to school, since as early as 1947 it was noted by the government that the Indian children enrolled in schools have at least 90% average attendance, though relatively high costs of sending children to school might also have been a significant factor.

Another factor of importance was the level of education received. For example, whereas about 100 out of 155 Indian primary schools taught children up to Class 8, only 53 of the total 326 Fijian primary schools did so. In other words, about 16.2% of the Fijian schools took their children only up to Class 5, and thereafter intense competition for selection followed. Largely but not mainly as a result of this feature in the Fijian primary schools that the proportion of Fijian pupils in higher grades, and particularly in the secondary schools, declined significantly relative to those of other racial groups. To put it differently, while the Fijian children constituted about 48% of the total school population attending primary schools in 1957, they were less than 30% of the total number of pupils attending post-primary schools. The respective figures for the Indian children were 46.5% and 56%.

Despite further improvements in the quality of schools and teachers throughout the 1960's, these kinds of structured inequality in education, of course, had considerable implications for occupation and income levels throughout the post-war colonial period, not only within and between racial groups but at the general societal level as well. And it is to a brief description of occupation and income inequalities that we now turn.

(b) Occupation and Income

Like the distribution of land and education resources described above, it will be seen that during the post-war period the distribution of occupation and income were most inequitous. Though of itself the distribution of occupation would help but little to show the extent of inequality, when such a distribution is linked with income the nature and extent of inequality becomes most meaningful. However, it will be shown that not only occupation-linked income but also unearned income, generated essentially through the ownership of private property and accumulated capital, were becoming increasingly concentrated among proportionately fewer people.

Largely as a result of natural increases, since the 1920's the population of Fiji had increased at a rapid pace. (see Table 4.3).

By 1956 the population had increased to 345,000[17] and ten years later it increased to 476,727.[18] The post-war period also saw considerable expansion in Fiji's economy, creating not only a series of new positions requiring differing types and levels of skill and education but also varying types and levels of income. Indeed, it was largely in response to the needs of an expanding economy rather than on account of public pressure that the colonial government was led to place an increased emphasis on the expansion and development of post-war education.

(i) Occupation Distribution

As already discussed in the previous chapter, following the abolition of the indenture system, the inter-war period saw a rapid rise in the number of independent and tenant farmers in the cane areas, though the situation remained largely unchanged in the copra and root-crop producing areas. By the end of the inter-war period, therefore, the size of wage labour and salaried personnel employed was relatively insignificant. The sugar, copra, and mining industries were the main areas employing wage labour. The work was mainly seasonal except in the gold mining industry which, as the largest single employer of wage labour, had only 1,675 workers in 1938.[19]

However, following the industrial expansion and diversification which occurred during and after the Second World War, Fiji's occupational structure experienced a dramatic change. According to the 1956 Census Report, the number of persons gainfully employed during that year was 92,077 and of this about 60% were still in agriculture.[20] Nevertheless, the rise in the number of wage earners was considerable. As table 4.4 shows, from an almost insignificant group in 1938, the number of wage earners rose to about 14,500 in 1946, and to 23,100 or about 25 per cent of the occupied population in 1956. By 1966, the number of wage earners had jumped to 28,500 or about 30 per cent of the gainfully occupied population.[21] By 1969, the number of wage workers had increased to 36,377, or to just over twice the number of salaried personnel, which was 16,718.[22]

In addition to agriculture, the sectors which expanded most rapidly and steadily during the post-war years included manufacturing, construction, commerce, and professional and allied services. Together they employed about 24 per cent of the total gainfully employed population in 1956, and by 1966 this figure rose to about 35 per cent. It should be noted, however, that entertainment and personal services sector, of which tourisim became increasingly the most significant part, had the greatest rate of growth, and especially in the late 1960's and early 1970's when it emerged as an important employing sector - though hardly the most rewarding sector for the local employees.

While detailed information on those who were gainfully employed in the agricultural sector are less precise than on those on wages and salaries, relevant data are nevertheless available. For

Table 4.4

Yearly Totals of Wage Earners, 1946-1969

(Thousands)

Year	No. of Wage Earners	Year	No. of Wage Earners
1946	14.5	1958	23.6
1947	15.5	1959	22.4
1948	16.1	1960	23.9
1949	16.8	1961	21.6
1950	17.5	1962	22.8
1951	17.8	1963	23.9
1952	19.1	1964	25.8
1953	19.7	1965	28.7
1954	20.7	1966	28.5
1955	21.7	1967	30.7
1956	23.1	1968	33.3
1957	23.4	1969	36.4

Source: Annual Reports of Labour Department; Annual Employment Surveys of the Bureau of Statistics.

instance, of the 60% or about 55,000 persons who constituted the farming population in 1956, only about 2,500 were permanent wage earners who worked mostly on larger farms. Of the remaining 52,550, of whom 28,000 were Fijians and 23,000 Indians and 1,550 others, most were either landholders or family/relative of such holders who worked either part-time or full-time on their farms.[22]

But while almost all the members of the farming population were not classified as wage-earners, the majority were nevertheless engaged in producing cash crops and shared in the returns from such produce. Thus, of the 23,000 Indian farming population, about

16,883 were engaged in the production of sugarcane alone. Similarly, of all the Fijian males 15 years and over engaged in agriculture in 1956, some 67.7 per cent were connected with the production of cash crops, while about 31% produced no cash crop at all.

Perhaps the extent to which the farming population of Fiji is oriented towards cash economy is best demonstrated by the use to which the agricultural land holders put their land. In 1968, for instance, only 18 per cent of the 33,521 agricultural land holders of the colony were engaged in the production of crops for home or direct consumption, while some 72% were engaged in the production for both direct consumption and market, and about 59 per cent were involved in the production of crops and other farm produce mainly geared to domestic and/or foreign markets.[23] To put this differently, in 1968 only about 6,000 out of a total of 33,521 holders, mostly 0-5 acre Fijian land holders, did not participate in the production of cash crops.

Therefore, as table 4.5 helps to show, the number of gainfully occupied population in 1966 was 99,525 while the figure for the economically active population was 120,574. In other words, about 21,049 or 21.1 per cent of the working population, though economically active, was either not engaged in the production of goods and services for direct consumption and therefore not considered as gainfully employed,[24] or was underemployed in the village agriculture, since Table 4.5 does not show any unemployment in

Table 4.5

Economically Active Population, 1966

Occupational Categories by Sectors

	Primary Industries		Other Industries		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Man. Prop. & Executive	18,754	43.49	4,515	8.00	23,269	23.38
Supervisory & Clerical	632	1.47	4,575	8.11	5,207	5.23
Skilled	383	0.89	9,743	17.27	10,126	10.17
Semi-Skilled	1,453	3.37	11,747	20.83	13,200	13.26
Unskilled	21,898	50.78	12,319	21.84	34,217	34.38
Unemployed	-	-	5,235	9.28	5,235	5.26
Professional	-	-	5,276	9.35	5,276	5.30
Allied Workers	-	-	2,995	5.31	2,995	3.01
Total	43,120	100.00	56,405	100.00	99,525	100.00

Source: Compiled from the Report on the Census of Population, 1966 (C.P. No. 9 of 1968) and Annual Statistical Abstract, Fiji 1970-71.

Notes: This table excludes those engaged in:-
(a) Subsistence or village agriculture;
(b) Personal Storage Services, including loading and unloading of vessels;
(c) Armed Services, and not stated industries.

the primary industry.

Perhaps a more precise and meaningful insight into Fiji's occupational structure can be gained from Table 4.6 which shows the distribution of wage earners and salaried personnel in 1969 by sex

Table 4.6

Distribution of Wage Earners and Salaried Personnel

1969

Occupational Category	Male	Female	Total	%
Managerial	5,886	2,017	7,903	17.02
Clerical	6,519	2,161	8,680	18.69
Manual	27,975	1,875	29,850	64.29
Total	40,380	6,053	46,433	100.00

Source: Annual Statistical Abstract, p.99:Employment Survey Data, Bureau of Statistics, 1969.

and the type of task they performed.

However, since any amount of insight into the distribution of occupation, education or land would not of itself enable us to show the extent of inequality in resource distribution which came to exist in Fiji during the post-war colonial period, we now proceed to a brief description of the kind of income inequalities which these and other factors helped to generate.

(ii) Income Distribution and Income Inequality

Having described in outline the occupational structure and the distribution of occupation, we are now in a position to present briefly the nature of income distribution and income inequality which characterized the post-war colonial Fiji.

Although income-linked factors which make for the differential distribution of income have been operative in Fiji for decades now, not until the post-war years that such factors have become highly structured and almost unalterable. As we have seen above, such income-related factors as types and levels of education, occupation, and skill are of relatively recent origin in Fiji. Nevertheless, they are most widespread and significant in their implications for the life chances and life styles of the societal members. Others, such as private ownership in property and accumulated capital, including control over land, though they originated much earlier in Fiji's history, they also became highly structured in the post-war years.

As in all capitalist societies, in Fiji the data on personal income, either earned or unearned, are always the least accessible. However, with the need for increased government intervention in the area of economic planning in the post-war years, much data on all kinds of income, both in the public and the private sector, have become available, and even accessible, in recent years.

We have already shown above the manner in which the various segments of Fiji's economically active population are engaged. Therefore, wages and salaries, returns from the sale of farm and business products, interests on investment, and rents are some of the more important sources of income. Of these, wages and salaries and the returns from the sale of cash crops are perhaps the main sources of income for the vast majority of the gainfully occupied population, while income from professional and other services, returns from business sale, interests on investment, and rents find their way into proportionately fewer hands.

Since prior to 1969 information on the number of salaried personnel and their income levels were not available, the following two tables give income distribution by wage earners and salaried personnel in respect of the years 1969 and 1970.

As Table 4.7 clearly shows, even within the salaried category income varied within a range from under $1,000 per year to upwards of $10,000 and income distribution was most inequitous, since just over 70% of the salary earners in both 1969 and 1970 had incomes under $1,500 per year. Similarly, as Table 4.8 shows, there was a wide gap between the income of the highest and the lowest paid wage earners, and during both 1969 and 1970 at least 80% of Fiji's wage earners were receiving an income of under 35 cent an hour or less than $728 per year.

Differential income distribution between salary and wage earners was most marked in that while at least 76% of the workers on wages and salaries were receiving less than $1,000 per year, no more than 7% to 9% of the wage earners received $1,000 or more, whereas just over 50% of those in the salaried category were in receipt of such income in both these years.

If the inequality in income distribution both within and between

Table 4.7

Income Distribution Among Salaried Personnel 1969 and 1970

Income Range	1969 Number	1969 %	1970 Number	1970 %
$				
10,000 and over	20)	3.31	675	3.80
5,000 - 9,999	512)			
2,000 - 4,999	2,856	17.82	2,923	16.49
1,500 - 1,999	1,400	8.73	1,611	9.09
1,000 - 1,499	3,423	21.35	3,745	21.13
under 1,000	7,820	48.79	8,769	49.49
Total	16,031	100.00	17,723	100.00

Source: Annual Employment Census, Bureau of Statistics, 1969 and 1970; Annual Statistical Abstract, Fiji, 1970-71

these two groups appears gross, the Gross Domestic Product (G.P.D.) per capita figures of $278 for 1969 and $325 for 1970[25] meant that the inequality in income between these two categories and the rest of Fiji's working population was still more significant. This refers to the income disparity between those on salaries and wages and those who are dependent on farm income. But since income of the farming population is generally not available, we give figures with particular reference to those engaged in the production of sugarcane.

As the figures in Table 4.9 attempt to illustrate, the average

Table 4.8

Income Distribution Among Wage Earners

1969 and 1970

Income Range			1969		1970	
Per Hour		Per Year	Number	%	Number	%
100 cents and over	OR	2080 dollars and over *	111	0.37	113	0.33
60 - 99		1248 - 2079	561	1.85	743	2.19
45 - 59		936 - 1247	1,371	4.51	2,168	6.40
40 - 44		832 - 935	1,435	4.72	1,409	4.16
35 - 39		728 - 831	1,602	5.27	2,310	6.82
30 - 34		624 - 727	4,808	15.81	6,780	20.02
25 - 29		520 - 623	8,068	26.54	12,304	36.33
20 - 24		420 - 519	9,788	32.20	5,486	16.20
15 - 19		312 - 419	1,578	5.19	1,457	4.30
under 15		0 - 311	1,080	3.55	1,097	3.24
Total			30,402	100.00	33,867	100.00

Source: Annual Employment, Bureau of Statistics, 1969 and 1970; Annual Statistical Abstract, Fiji, 1970-71

* Total income for the year calculated on the basis of 40 - hour week x 52 weeks, and it does not include overtime earnings.

gross proceed per contractor in 1969 was $1,009.33. Sugarcane is supposedly the most profitable farm product in Fiji. Yet, according to a random sample survey of 570 farms conducted by the Bureau of Statistics in 1969, the agricultural land holders in the main sugarcane growing areas had an average of 8.12 members per household.[26] In other words, an average gross per capita sugarcane farm income of

Table 4.9

Average Gross Income Per Sugarcane Contractor (Farmer) 1958 - 1969

Year	Tons (000) Sugarcane Produced	Cane Price Per Ton	Total Cane Proceeds	No. of Cane Contractors	Average Gross Proceed Per Contractor
					$
1958	1531	6.91	10579210	14825	713.61
1959	2447	6.43	15734210	15753	998.81
1960	1168	7.32	8549760	13875	616.19
1961	1148	6.41	7358680	13948	527.58
1962	1824	6.99	12749760	13921	915.87
1963	2337	9.80	22902600	13924	1,644.83
1964	2319	7.20	16696800	14100	1,184.17
1965	2171	6.70	14545700	14798	982.95
1966	2192	6.49	14226080	15519	916.69
1967	2163	6.33	13691790	15609	877.17
1968	2826	6.51	18397260	15596	1,179.61
1969	2339	6.73	15741470	15596	1,009.33

Source: Compiled from figures in Current Economic Statistics, January, 1971.

$124.30 was about three times lower than the national G.P.D per capita income of $278 for 1969. Such an income, of course, does not take into account the general expenses associated with farming, the wide variations in the size of the sugarcane farms, and the fact that during that period about 51% of Fiji's population was dependent on farm incomes.[27]

This inequality in income distribution finds expression in an even more accentuated form at the inter-racial level. Though figures on all aspects are generally not available, those that are tend to support this contention. Table 4.10, for instance, shows the racial

Table 4.10

Estimated Per Capita Income in Fiji by Races, 1953

(Dollars)

	Income per head, cash and subsistence	Income per head, cash only
Fijians	121	60
Indians	128	113
Europeans and) Part-Europeans)	468	468
Chinese	302	279
All groups (inc."other")	147	113

Source: The Pattern of the Fiji Economy, The National Income, 1950-53, Council Paper No.44 of 1956.

disparity in per capita income in 1953.

But if there is any doubt in the extent of racial disparity in income as portrayed in Table 4.10, figures for the distribution of gross, net, and taxable incomes, as well as the amounts actually paid in tax by racial groups in later years, more than confirm this gross racial disparity in income. Table 4.11, for instance, shows the distribution of gross and net incomes of individuals by racial groups in 1967. It should be especially noted that after tax deduction there was only a slight difference between the gross and the net figures of each racial group in the respective income range, reflecting the very low taxation rate which existed throughout the colonial period. Indeed, the income of the majority of gainfully employed population was so low that only about 20% or 20,147 individuals were liable to tax. Table 4.12 gives a breakdown by racial

Table 4.11

The Distribution of Gross and Net Incomes of Individuals by Racial Groups, 1967 (Percentages)

Income Range $	Fijians	Indians	Europeans	Chinese
0-1000	30 (31)	22 (23)	5 (6)	9 (10)
1001-2000	35 (35)	34 (35)	14 (15)	22 (23)
2001-5000	31 (31)	28 (28)	43 (44)	44 (45)
over 5000	4 (3)	16 (14)	38 (35)	24 (22)
Total	100	100	100	100

Source: Inland Revenue Department, National Accounts Report.

Notes: The figures in parentheses indicate the proportion of each racial category in the respective income range after tax deduction.

category and income range of those individuals who actually paid tax in 1967.

Like the disparities in the distribution of land and other resources, the disparity in income distribution, both at the societal and inter-racial levels, are most glaring and structured. But differential resource distribution, either at the general societal level, or at the inter-and intra-racial levels, and whether in land, education, occupation, income, political power or social status, or as a result of a combination of these factors, is only a symptom of a general historical process. To say this, however, is not to state or

Table 4.12

Individuals Assessed for Income Tax, 1967

(Percentages)

Income Range $F	Fijians[a]	Indians	Europeans	Chinese
0-1000	54	51	25	31
1001-2000	31	33	26	33
2001-5000	14	13	35	30
Over 5000	1	3	14	7
Total	100	100	100	100
No. of tax payers	2,370	12,432	4,308	1,037
Total tax paid ($000)	142	1,097	1,416	197
Percentage of tax paid	4.98	38.46	49.65	6.91
Percentage of population(b)	44.96	50.55	3.41	1.08

Source: Inland Revenue Department, National Accounts Report.

Notes: Subject to rounding errors.

(a) Includes other Pacific Islanders.

(b) Figures from the 1966 Census were used to express the percentage of each racial category to the whole population.

even imply that these factors are not inter-linked or that they do not affect the nature and character of resource distribution, or the nature of inequality itself. Indeed, these factors are clearly interrelated and interpenetrating in their socio-economic ramifications, and as such they help to accentuate the problem of inequality. However, in and of themselves they do not affect inequality. But when linked to a process, as they are in all capitalist societies, they become an integral part of a system of structured inequality.

Therefore, while we have so far given an essentially descriptive account of the nature of some of the more important inequalities in resource distribution in Fiji, in the following section we attempt to provide a brief explanation of how such inequalities have come into being. The explanation offered will necessarily be in historical reference and for this purpose some of the more salient features already covered in the previous two chapters will also be utilized.

III The Major Dynamics of Inequality

In the previous two chapters we have shown how the pre-colonial imperialist activities had led to the gradual breakdown and eventual collapse of the basic indigenous institutions and, hence, the traditional social structure, and how the advent of formal colonial rule provided the necessary stimulus for the emergence and continued development of a subordinate capitalist structure. Such a structure, however, rested essentially on three basic institutions: the political, the economic and the social, including religious. But these institutions were not only the cornerstones on which the new structure was built; they also provided the basic framework within which the process of production, distribution, and exchange could take place. And, as it will be shown, it is to this institutional framework, and the process of production, distribution and exchange that it generated and supported over time, that the kind of inequalities we described above owe their origin and development.

1. The Institutional Framework

As we have already outlined at the beginning of the last chapter, the political, economic and socio-religious institutions provided the bases on which Fiji's colonial society became operative. Such bases, however, were interlinked, sustained, and nourished by mutual interests, and were always interdependent and interpenetrating and, except in rare instances, supportive of one another. Moreover, from their very inception in Fiji, these institutions contained the seeds of socio-economic and political inequalities. We briefly describe below the nature of their interlocking interests, and show how they maintained their interdependent and interpenetrating relationships within Fiji, leaving aside the nature of their linkages to the external world to the next chapter.

To begin with, the three main groups associated with the respective institutions were the colonial officials, the planters and the traders, and the missionaries. In general, they originated from similar backgrounds, and held similar ideas, beliefs and values. They were conspicuous, and as a collectivity they presented a distinct contrast to those of the natives among whom they lived - though in different residential areas. Only institutionally, and largely through their different vocations, that they were classifiable as three separate groups.

Yet, as the following examples help to show, the interest of each group was dependent on those of the others. At both the political and the administrative levels, for instance, it was mainly a small group of senior colonial officials headed by the governor, rather than by a group of elected politicians, who governed the colony. In other words, the people who executed the colonial government's policy were also the legislators of such policy.

The establishment and maintenance of peace and order, however, was a task of prime importance to the colonial government. But as we have already shown in chapter two, by the time the colonial rule came into being the missionaries had already done considerable groundwork. The majority of the natives had already embraced Christianity, if only nominally, and therefore the major task was to turn them into devout Christians. And this was the task which the missionaries accomplished in the decades following the advent of colonial rule.

Fiji was not a conquered country in the sense of invasion by physical force, though the use of physical force was not ruled out, even after it became a colony. Nonetheless, the Fijians were a conquered people at the level of beliefs and values. Surrender to an alien religion was perhaps more damaging at the psychological level than conquest of any other form. It was this more than anything else which was the major achievement of the Christian missionaries. And from this flowed the kind of peace and order which the colonial government and the planters so cherished.

The respect of private property and the respect for authority and elders have been two of the major principles of Christianity which all converts and potential converts were taught. Therefore, in inculcating such values among the Fijians,the missionaries were performing a vital task, not only for the peace-loving colonial government but also for the capitalist entrepreneurs as well.

The missionaries were, of course, rewarded for their good work both by the government and the capitalist enterprises. From the colonial government this usually took the form of protection for the missionaries and their adherents against native resistance. From the private enterprises it took the form of generous donations, such as grants of funds for schools run by the missionaries; we have already cited the CSR Company's benevolence in this regard.

The relationship between the private enterprises and the colonial government, however, was of a different kind. In general, however, it meant the maintenance of a favourable government policy towards private enterprise in return for increased government revenues through direct and indirect taxes. And as we have shown in the previous chapter, initially the colonial government was desperate for more revenue, while the planters desperately sought favourable labour laws. And earlier still, the legislation giving legal status to private ownership in property, and especially the land laws sanctioning unequal land distribution among Fiji's European and native population, was perhaps the first major step of the colonial government in support of capitalist economic institutions.

Only in the case of labour legislations which prohibited the employment of the natives other than as casual workers by the planters that the interest of the colonial government collided with that of the private enterprise. But as we discussed in the previous chapter, it was only partly for the reason that at the time the planters were a poor source of revenue, and largely because the government wished to avoid native rebellion while at the same time it saw the possibility of a permanent and stable source of revenue through the native produce tax, that the colonial government took this measure. But this was the measure which also led to the formulation of the Native Policy whereby a separate native administration financed solely by revenue derived from the natives was the ultimate outcome.

These are only a few of the numerous examples which clearly illustrate the kind of relationship which came to exist between the colonial government, the missionaries, and the private sector during the early years of the colonial rule. But while the institutional framework and the intimate nature of the relationship within which these three groups operated are clear, the structure that resulted from their activities in the late 1870's and early 1880's, and especially after the Indian indentured workers and large companies began to arrive, had consequences of far-reaching significance to the majority of Fiji's population.

2. The Colonial Division of Labour

What has often been described as a "colonial division of labour" was for all practical purposes no more or less than an organization of labour on racial lines, providing differential position, differential participation, and differential reward in the total productive process. In the case of Fiji, the institutional framework described above had already given rise to such an organizational structure by the 1880's. Whereas until 1870's the natives and other Pacific Islanders provided the bulk of labour supply, the Native Policy and the series of native labour legislations, together with the arrival of a large number of Indian indentured workers in the 1880's, had added a new dimension to the earlier and somewhat indeterminate organizational structure.

We briefly describe this division of labour with reference to the position and role of the three main racial categories in the new productive process. However, since we have already discussed in some detail the position of the Indians and the Europeans, our main emphasis will be on the nature of the Fijian position.

Though the arrival of the Indian had saved the Fijian from what Governor Gordon described as "virtual servitude," the indentured Indian labourer became almost a slave in doing so, and until 1920 he remained essentially a wage-earner in a semi-free condition. After the Europeans had been granted titles to the land they claimed, the remaining land was made inalienable from the natives. The resulting scarcity of land, and of cultivable land in particular, directly affected the position of the Indian. While only a few of those who had served their contract were able to buy land, many became dependent on native leases, and the majority remained landless and worked as labourers for others - thus fulfilling an essential condition in the development of capitalism in Fiji. Nevertheless, they remained in the main-stream of economic activities, living on scattered farmsteads, in and around the town, or on the remaining copra and sugar plantations.

The situation with regard to the Fijian, however, was somewhat different. The implementation of the Native Policy meant a separate native code of laws for the government of the natives under a separate administration. A native produce tax was established to cover the day-to-day cost of such an administration. In addition, precaution was taken through a series of labour legislations to curtail the use of native labour outside the Fijian communal boundaries, and especially by persons other than the natives, except as casual labourers. And as has already been described in the previous two chapters, the lands not alienated by the Europeans or needed by the Crown were handed over to the natives, with the mataqali being legally recognized as the land-holding units.

However, the native code of laws, which thereafter governed the native organizational structure, was itself a product of what the colonial officials, and especially the colonial governor, interpreted or conceived the native code to have been prior to the extension of direct colonial rule. In consequence, the emergent native authority structure and the organizational system took little to no account of the many significant features of the earlier indigenous structure and the drastically changed conditions in which they were to operate. For instance, under the new structure there was no equality of access to land, though the Fijians still held some 83.6 per cent of Fiji's land area. Moreover, such an organizational structure was to co-exist alongside a monetary system which had linkages with the outside world, and which had already penetrated the native way of life, even well before the coming of the colonial rule. In other words, the natives were no longer the only people inhabiting the islands, and neither theirs was the dominant structure nor they the dominant people, and they no longer determined the destiny of their people.

Such a rigid division of people, with the Europeans having complete socio-economic and political hegemony in their hands, the Indians working as labourers, and the Fijians generally denied access to the workings of the outside world while at the same time being a part of it, had important consequences. It was this rigid socio-economic and political order that provided the base for the operation of a process whereby the various segments of Fiji's population competed for unequal rewards on unequal terms. And it is to a discussion of this process, how it operated, and with what consequences, that we now turn.

3. The Process of Differential Resource Distribution

In a society initially characterised by a rigid racial division of labour, wherein differential structural position, inequality in participation and reward, and inequality in access to resources generally were the order of the day, it is not too difficult to show how a system of inequality emerged over the decades. Nevertheless, the process we are about to describe was made up of a complex set of variables.

In essence the process involved an interplay or interaction between the following three major factors: (a) the differential structural position at the societal, and inter- and intra-racial levels; (b) a discrimatory reward system which became increasingly operative after the decline of the indigenous economic institutions, and especially after the weakening of 'kerekere' or the institution of sharing of goods and services among the Fijians; and (c) the underlying dominant class and race interests which had become increasingly operative since the advent of the plantation mode of production in the 1860's.

The process itself was continuous, with the three main factors continually producing, reproducing, nourishing, and feeding on one another. At any point in time the existing structural inequality provided the grounds or the bases for inequality in further rewards, and such inequality in reward did not only further accentuate the existing differences in resource distribution, but in doing so it also reinforced and strengthened the existing differences in the structural position and, hence, the dominant class and race interests. In other words, such a process continually helped to maintain and perpetuate the status quo.

That the process was real, all pervasive, and that its cumulative effects were directly reflected in the post-war socio-economic and political structure of Fiji, can be further demonstrated from the brief analyses that follow. The effects of the process are examined within the context of the new institutional framework, and especially in the context of a racially segregated social structure. The main aim of the discussion is to show the basic causes and consequences of differential participation, differential access, and differential rewards, both at inter-and intra-racial levels.

(a) The Fijian Case

The new but highly rigid hierarchical structure which resulted from the colonial government's Native Policy might be classified under three broad socio-economic and political categories. The chiefs and the high chiefs made up the elite of the Fijian society. Through the Council of Chiefs they had direct access to the colonial governor on matters of policy relating to Fijian affairs generally and the native administration in particular. Below them was a group consisting of a few intermediate officials (other than the chiefs) and those who held positions of influence and authority as heads of the provinces, districts, and villages. Finally, the members of the landholding units and others constituted the rank-and-file of the Fijian people.

But as we have severally noted, the colonial government's native land laws had already introduced some disparity in land distribution among the Fijians. And the continued decline of the Fijian population until 1921 and a rapid increase thereafter had drastically altered both the number and the size of the land-holding units, while at the same time the area of land remained constant. Such a demographic trend, however, not only accentuated the initial disparity, but also gave rise to a class of almost landless Fijians.

However, the increasing internal disparity in land distribution was only one significant factor. The native labour legislation, which was an integral part of the colonial Native Policy, meant that, except for their chiefs, the Fijians were generally confined to their villages, working in their village gardens and/or on the "tax" farms; the produce from the latter was passed on to the colonial government which sold it to the traders and appropriated the proceeds as tax. Because of a general unavailability of markets for most crops produced by the Fijians, only copra and banana were accepted by the government as tax in produce in lieu of tax in money. The surpluses of other crops were either directly consumed by the producers or given away to those who needed them, though at times they were sold for cash in towns or in Indian settlements.

Therefore, only by working as casual workers for the planters and the traders, as government employees, or through rents and/or the sale of surpluses direct to the local market, that the Fijians derived any cash income. But cash income so derived was generally small, except perhaps in the case of a few salaried employees in the central and native administration. In any event, the cash income thus obtained was always scarce relative to the new and growing needs of the Fijian population. Imported household goods, such as clothing, kitchen and garden utensils, children's education, donations to religious organizations and ceremonials, and food and rent if living and working in towns, were perhaps some of the key areas of cash expenditure. Personal savings was therefore either nil or negligible.

Moreover, though the traditional type houses (bure) built for chiefs were erected to last much longer than a few years,the housing standard of the average Fijian remained poor in quality, generally built on structures of rough or undressed local timber, and thatched with local weeds or sugarcane leaves. Nevertheless, these houses were comfortable and well adapted to the climatic conditions.

In addition, while education for the Fijian children was widespread from the beginning of the colonial rule, such education as given was perhaps only sufficient for the reading of the Bible translated in the native language. Even as late as 1956, the majority of school-going native children could be taught only up to class six, and only in the last two of these six years children were exposed to some English. Until the late 1930's secondary education was largely absent from the Fijian education scene, and the majority of schools that existed were declared as substandard, even by the colonial government's standard. And trained teachers were scarce.

But while the Fijians remained physically confined, sheltered, and protected under the aegis of an alien imposed colonial structure, their development potentials were being stagnated, if not retarded. On the one hand, their traditional skills were not being developed and, on the other, the colonial Native Policy, enshrined in various land, labour and administrative laws, prohibited native participation in the wider socio-economic and political development that was taking place. On the one hand, their traditional handicraft culture and products were considered as 'primitive' and therefore something to look down upon; on the other, their dependence on cash income, imported products, and on imported ideas and values were increasing. Therefore, the gap between what they actually realized and what they aspired to was being continually magnified.

It was, therefore, this contradictory Native Policy, and the general lack of exposure and participation that it legislated and supported on behalf of the natives, that prevented the development potentials of the Fijians, and, over the decades, created an enormous gap in resource distribution between them and the rest of Fiji's population. We outline below some of the consequences which flowed from these in relation to the wider socio-economic and political activities in Fiji.

(i) The Obstacles to Fijian Participation and Access to Resources

There were several factors which helped to bring about the post-war gap in resource distribution between the Fijians and those of other racial/ethnic origin. But underlying most of these factors was the long-term effects of the colonial government's Native Policy. By its very design the interests of the Native Policy was opposed to Fijian participation in the world outside the immediate native structure that it had erected. In the long-term its operation helped to create and perpetuate a series of disabilities or incapacities among the natives in relation to those outside the native system.

Except for temporary exposure through casual work, the Fijians were legally prohibited from working, initially for the planters and traders, and later in the fast-developing commerce, industry, and trade, since most of these developments were taking place outside their native structure. Similarly, in the area of cash crop production other than copra and banana, and especially in the farming and production of sugarcane, the Fijians' exposure and participation were kept to the minimum. The net effect of decades of isolation meant that the Fijians became less and less adaptable to the skills and techniques involved, both in the cash crop farming sector as well as in industry, trade and commerce, and indeed in most of the professional expertise associated with these areas.

For instance, in view of their early start in the field of education relative to the Indians, one might expect that there would be more professionally qualified Fijians than Indians. But as Table 4.13 clearly demonstrates, even as late as 1958, there were only two such Fijian personnel as opposed to 58 Indians and 74 Europeans. This table, however, excludes 97 Fijian and 18 Indian locally trained Assistant Medical Officers who were not considered fully qualified. In any case,

Table 4.13

Numbers Qualified in Selected Professions

by Racial Categories 1958

	Lawyers	Doctors	Dentists	Total
Fijians	-	1	1	2
Indians	38	12	8	58
Chinese	-	1	-	1
Part-Europeans	1	1	-	2
Europeans	17	51	6	74
Total	56	66	15	137

Source: Council Paper No. 1 of 1960, p.12

local training, and especially that of teachers, has always suffered low evaluation and low morale throughout the colonial period and, accordingly, its monetary reward was relatively low. Hence, highly-paid Fijians were rare.

But a general lack of experience, skills, and expertise in all these fields not only had cumulative effect on the Fijian's income, and inter-generationally, but they also helped to discourage them from further attempts to participate in the wider socio-economic and political fields. For instance, while the native participation in community-oriented tasks were made obligatory and compulsory by legislation, those who found them too obtrusive, burdensome, and frustrating were permitted to opt out of the system. But these built-in incapacities which the Native Policy had brought about over the years, together with his generally low education, low morale, and the generally unfavourable attitudes about the Fijians' task-related abilities and aptitudes, were strong forces for the latter to contend with. In consequence, often they found themselves in low-paid jobs or no jobs at all. Moreover, even those with ample education and experience often found themselves at a disadvantage against those who were perhaps better qualified by education and exposure but who were also competing for the same or similar jobs. In any case, often people of other groups had close contact with relatives and friends who were already in the firm and who helped to get them recruited. Finally, in a colonial society based on racism, the practice of racial discrimination in the recruitment area must not be over-ruled.

But perhaps one of the most significant and conspicuous long-term effects of the colonial Native Policy and the disabilities that it generated among the Fijian people can be seen from the almost total absence of native-owned private enterprise in Fiji. Indeed, until the advent of co-operative societies in the post-war period, there were scarcely any such ventures in which the Fijians participated as owners or shareholders.

There were two major factors which militated against Fijian entry in private enterprise. The first was the cumulative effects of non-participation in the wider economic activities which we have already discussed above. The second, and perhaps the more effective obstacle, was a general lack of funds, or assets that could be converted as funds, for investment purposes. Not only the generally low quality of his house and the usually non-marketable nature of the crops met with low evaluation, but even if such assets were in themselves sufficient, the lands on which they stood were usually collectively held and were made inalienable to non-Fijians, a factor which provided a ready excuse for the banks - they generally refused loans to the natives. Therefore, the existence of these factors, together with the natives' generally negligible savings, if any, meant that the door to private enterprise other than co-operative societies remained almost permanently barred to the Fijians throughout Fiji's colonial history.

In general, therefore, it was inevitable that the cumulative effects of the disparities inherent in the new socio-economic and political order, and especially in the colonial division of labour, of which the colonial Native Policy was an integral part, should continue to produce and accentuate such inequalities in the post-war decades, both among the Fijians, and between them and the rest of Fiji's population. Our discussion of the Indian case helps to throw further light on the consequences of differential participation.

(b) The Nature and Consequences of Indian Participation

But if the Fijians generally remained a solitary group, almost wholly deprived of participation in the wider socio-economic and political developments, the Indians formed the very basis of such developments. Though expendable as indentured workers, they were also indispensable to all sectors of Fiji's population, including the

Fijians. Given the conditions of the 1870's, other than the natives they were the only source of labour in large numbers, and until the late 1930's the colonial government and the business interests alike were still hoping that more Indians would emigrate to Fiji.

The nature and character of their participation in the socio-economic life of Fiji was, therefore, distinctly different to that of the native Fijian. And as we discussed in the previous chapter, even by the end of the indenture system in 1920, some important socio-economic differentiation among the Indians had already occurred. That this trend continued thereafter, and even accelerated, was largely due to the nature and character of the Indians' position and participation in the total productive process. We discuss this in outline below.

As we have already noted in the preceding chapter, at the socio-political level, the conditions under which the Indian came to Fiji and the conditions under which he worked had profound effects on his caste affinities, caste practices, and kinship ties. His solidarity in Fiji was, therefore, no longer based on caste or family loyalties but rather on common economic interests, ethnic identity, and perhaps even on the perception of a common foe.

Moreover, until 1916 they were almost leaderless and were politically unrepresented. In that year, however, one of their members was nominated to the Legislative Council of Fiji. And it was over the issue of choice for nomination that the Indians for the first time acted as a community, and it was also for the first time that political factionalism, over the choice of the leader, had surfaced among them.

Therefore, unlike the rigid internal authority structure and religious codes imposed upon the Fijians, the Indians lived and worked in a more economic-oriented framework, with no caste obligations and less religious trappings to contend with. And while circumstance forced them to work as indentured workers under harsh conditions, their participation in agriculture exposed them to skills and techniques of large-scale agricultural commodity production - an experience which they were not likely to forget in a hurry. Moreover, long after the end of the indenture system, such commodities as they produced, and especially sugarcane, remained the most viable and important export-oriented/cash-earning crops in the colony.

Perhaps a still more significant contrast between the Fijian and Indian positions was the Indians' ability to diversify their economic interests, from mainly agricultural workers and farmers to industry, trade, and commerce. There were several factors underlying this. First, although during the indenture period the European planter and merchant interests attempted to persuade the colonial government to restrict Indian economic activities simply to that of a wage-earning class, the government's need to encourage the Indians to settle in Fiji made it impossible to accede to their request. This strengthened position of the Indians was an important factor which in the 1920's and 1930's forced the CSR Company to handover the sugarcane farming and production activities to the Indians, since it was clear that the Indians would no longer be prepared to work as plantation labourers for the company and, in any case, they were free to enter other jobs or return to India. Therefore, as workers of Fiji, they had become increasingly indispensable and, hence, an economically powerful force to contend with. And, of course, so long as the Fijians remained restricted and isolated from developing and performing similar roles, the Indians did not have to compete with groups other than Europeans.

Second, in distinct contrast to the Fijians, the Indians were participants in the dominant economic sector where new positions were being created continually in commerce, trade, and new industries. And for enterprising Indians, and especially for those with accumulated capital, either in the form of cash, or realizable assets, such as a good house and/or land under marketable sugarcane crops, the opportunities to enter small privately owned business was considerable.

In general, therefore, the emergent socio-economic differences in the position of the Indians as a whole presented a marked contrast to that of the Fijians, and to a large extent these differences between the two groups accounted for the increased differential resource distribution gap between them in the post-war years. And only in the distribution of land that the position of the Indians as a whole remained most unfavourable.

But only when we compare the two groups as a whole that the resource disparities between them loom large. For as we have already shown, the disparities 'within'each of these two racial categories, by income, education, land, housing, occupation and by other resources, were so large that the vast majority of Fiji's subject groups were in very much the same socio-economic position, with hardly more than enough resources to live from hand-to-mouth in their every-day life. In other words, and especially during the post-war colonial period, it was no longer a matter of disparity between the two major racial groups, but rather between classes cross-cutting the two racial boundaries, with the dominant groups from each racial category having little incentive to change the structure of inequality that had come into being - for to change the structure would be to change the status quo, and all the status, power, and privileges that go with it.

IV Conclusions:

In the present chapter we have attempted to describe and explain in historical reference some of the major causes and consequences of important socio-economic and political factors which, though external in origin, are now basic to the capitalist structure that characterizes Fiji's post-war economy and society. In particular, we have described the nature and character of post-war resource distribution and the major historical dynamics underlying such distribution.

That resource distribution in Fiji is most inequitous, cumulative, and that they have resulted in continued uneven development through differential participation and access to such resources, have been clearly demonstrated. And as we have seen, imperialism, and especially colonialism and the policy and practice that arose therefrom, together with the subservient socio-economic and political relationship into which Fiji inevitably entered with the outside world, were the key factors underlying this process. Such a process necessarily has an external dimension which is discussed in some detail in the following chapter.

Notes and References

1. Council Paper No.1 of 1960.
2. Area under crops included; Sugarcane, 128,863; coconuts, 168,000; Bananas, 5,000 acres; Rice, 31,200 acres; Roots, 35,933; other crops, 9,997 acres. (See C.P. No.1 of 1960, p. 35, Table VIII).
3. This figure of the farm population is based on the 1956 Census. It does not include part-time workers or dependents, and does not reflect the total number of agricultural land-holders in Fiji.
4. C.P. No.1 of 1960 p.35.
5. Only since the 1968 Agricultural Census that more detailed and accurate figures for farm population have become available.
6. Annual Statistical Abstract, Fiji 1970-71 pp.162-63.
7. Ibid; p.168.
8. Ibid; p.163.
9. Ibid; p.170.
10. Fiji Report-Annual, 1968.
11. Annual Statistical Abstract, Fiji 1970-71 p.173.
12. C.P. No.13 of 1959 p.17.
13. Ibid.
14. C.P. No.1 of 1960 p.23-24.
15. Annual Statistical Abstract, Fiji 1970-71 p.173.
16. Colonial Report-Annual, 1938. Almost all data on education presented and discussed here are derived from these annual reports, 1934 to 1970.
17. Report on the Census of Population, 1956 (Council Paper No.1 of 1958).
18. Report on the Census of Population, 1966 (Council Paper No.9 of 1968).
19. Fiji Annual Colonial Report, 1938.

20. C.P. No.1 of 1960.

21. 1966 Census Report (C.P. No.9 of 1968).

22. Annual Statistical Abstract, Fiji, 1970-71.

23. Annual Statistical Abstract, Fiji 1970-71 p.169 ; Agricultural Census, 1968.

24. See Note at the bottom of table 4.5

25. Current Economic Statistics, Bureau of Statistics, Suva.

26. Annual Statistical Abstract, Fiji 1970-71 p.178.

27. Ibid, p.174.

Chapter Five

Dominance, Dependence, and Underdevelopment: the External Factor

I Introduction:

Since the beginning of the colonial rule, Fiji was becoming increasingly dependent upon and dominated by forces which were by then both alien and internal to her but were generally beyond her control. Such dependence and dominance, and their mutually interpenetrating relationship at the internal level, inevitably had consequences which led to still further dominance and dependence. In brief, the overall result was one of continued dominance, dependence, and underdevelopment.

The main objective of the present chapter ~~is~~ therefore to show, with particular reference to the post-war colonial period, how decades of continued dependence upon and domination by the outside world had necessarily and similtaneously set in motion a process of underdevelopment, from which Fiji has yet to recover. More specifically, the present chapter attempts to describe the nature and character of such dominance and dependence, and to show how they continually gave rise to a series of socio-economic and political problems within Fiji. In this sense, the present chapter, which is basically concerned with explaining the process of underdevelopment from the outside, and the preceding chapter, which deals with the development of uneven development from within, are intended to complement each other; together they attempt to explain the larger process of capitalist exploitation through dominance and dependence.

II Dominance and Dependence in the Post-War Decades

In chapter three we have already outlined the nature of external relations and internal conditions, and the problems to which they gave rise in the early years of the colonial rule. We discussed the political and administrative role of the colonial officials; the economic activities of the planters, traders and the larger foreign enterprises; Fiji's growing dependence on the international commodity market; and how Britain generally maintained a stringent political and financial control over Fiji. Moreover, in the preceding two chapters we also discussed the labour problem, the manner of its solution, the effects of the colonial Native Policy, and the generally uneven social structural development that precipitated from these during the post-war years.

It is in the context of these early relations and conditions, and those which emerged from these over the decades, that we now describe and discuss both the nature and character of internal dominance and external dependence, and the consequences of these on Fiji's post-war socio-economic and political progress.

(1) Ecomonic Dependence and Economic Dominance

Economic dominance and economic dependence, though analytically separable, are often intertwined in practice. In other words, what might be regarded as a source of economic dependence at one point in time might also become a source of internal domination at another. And as it is shown below, Fiji is no exception to such instances.

(a) Some Consequences of Ecomonic Dependence

There are several factors inherent in Fiji's colonial history which help to illustrate clearly the extent and the significance of her economic dependence on the outside world. Some of the more important of this indicators include (i) the level of Fiji's participation in the world economy, and especially on the world market; (ii) her reliance on the foreign money market, governments, and private enterprise, for investment capital, loans, and aids; and (iii) her reliance on foreign personnel, including 'experts' and intrepreneurs. Since we have already shown in the previous chapters the extent of Fiji's pre-1945 involvement and commitment in these areas, we briefly discuss these and their consequences on Fiji's economy and society in the post-war years.

(i) Participation in the World Economy

Despite Fiji's rather unfavourable pre-1945 experience with heavy reliance on the international commodity markets, and especially with the depressive effects of the ups and downs of the earlier cotton and sugar prices on Fiji's economy and society, her dependence on such markets continued unbroken into the post-war decades. Indeed, if anything, the significance of that dependence had considerably increased. That significance, however, lay not so much in the fact that the size of each commodity now exported had increased, but rather in the fact that the number of principal commodities exported over the decades had now shrunk to a few in number, while at the same time the number of people engaged in and dependent upon the production of the main export crops had greatly increased.

That a rather wide range of crops can be produced in Fiji and that most of these were actually produced in the latter years of the last century, is clearly indicated by the export records of that period. At that time - some 90 years ago - exports included copra, coir fibre, coconut oil, sugar, molasses, cotton, cottonseed, coffee, bananas, ginger, candlenuts, ivory nuts, maize, pepper, tobacco, yams, arrowroot, peanuts, beans, yaqona (Piper methysticum), hides, angora goat hair, lime juice, dried fruit, beeswax and rattan canes.[1]

But as we have already shown in the case of cotton and sugar production in Chapter Three, it was the external market and the price levels which essentially determined which of these export commodities were to be produced and their respective importance within Fiji's total economy. For instance, while cotton was the leading export crop in the late 1860's, in 1876 the principal crops were copra, cotton, sugar, maize and tabacco in that order, with cotton giving way to sugar in 1877 as the second most important crop.

Moreover, from the 1880's sugar became the dominant export crop, with copra remaining a poor second. And by the end of the inter-war period, the position of cotton was no longer significant and was replaced by banana as the third most important agricultural export commodity.

Yet, as table 5.1 and table 5.2 help to illustrate, the percentage composition of banana to the total domestic exports had been fast declining, and though still being the third most important export-oriented agricultural crop, by the end of the colonial rule its contribution to the total domestic exports was only 0.5 per cent. Similarly, the contribution of coconut products to the total domestic exports has been declining over the post-war years. Whereas between 1937 and 1958 it averaged about 20% of the total domestic exports (table 5.1)[2], between 1961 and 1970 the similar average was only 13.5 per cent (table 5.2)[3]. Only in the case of sugar, which averaged about 68.8 per cent of the total domestic exports between 1961 and 1970, that its dominant position in Fiji's economy remained intact.

After sugar and coconut products, gold occupied the third most important position among Fiji's principal domestic exports during the post-war years. With the discovery of gold in 1934, the gold mines came into full operation in 1938. Yet, as in the case of copra and banana exports, the contribution of gold to the total domestic exports has also been declining during the post-war years, and particularly between 1961 and 1970 when it averaged only 8.5 per cent of the total domestic exports (table 5.2).

Table 5.1

Imports and Percentage Composition of Principal Domestic Exports 1937-1958

Year	Total Imports (c.i.f.)	Total Domestic Exports (f.o.b.)	Sugar	Coconut Products	Bananas	Gold	Others	Total
	($F)	($F)	%	%	%	%	%	%
1937	3,521,488	4,243,840	65.44	19.20	3.78	7.83	3.75	100
1938	3,350,874	4,917,594	54.42	11.00	2.99	28.52	3.07	100
1947	10,232,772	11,632,662	48.83	24.60	1.25	22.16	3.16	100
1948	11,889,668	14,744,590	57.86	24.51	1.29	13.72	2.62	100
1957	30,432,012	25,559,092	61.15	21.86	2.66	8.41	5.92*	100
1958	35,205,454	24,490,196	63.36	19.93	1.33	9.31	6.07*	100

Source: Fiji Annual Reports.

* : In 1957 Managanese export made up 3.52% of the total domestic exports.
Similar figure for 1958 was 3.29%.

Notes : Figures subject to rounding errors.

Table 5.2

Imports and Percentage Composition of Principal Domestic Exports 1961-1970

Year	Total Imports (c.i.f.)	Total Domestic Exports (f.o.b.)	Sugar and Molasses	Coconut Products	Bananas	Gold	Other	Total
	($F000)	($F000)	%	%	%	%	%	%
1961	34,456	20,869	58.0	24.7	2.3	11.5	3.5	100
1962	34,772	24,986	68.6	16.2	1.4	9.5	4.3	100
1963	40,414	38,784	75.4	12.5	1.3	8.0	2.8	100
1964	55,251	46,242	77.9	12.7	0.6	6.0	2.8	100
1965	58,162	35,612	71.0	13.7	0.4	8.7	6.2	100
1966	50,545	32,254	68.8	10.7	1.0	9.4	10.1	100
1967	56,291	34,917	69.3	9.5	0.4	8.9	11.9	100
1968	68,402	39,246	64.3	13.1	0.9	8.8	12.9	100
1969	77,888	43,548	65.9	10.4	0.7	7.7	15.3	100
1970	90,502	49,254	65.6	11.6	0.5	6.8	15.5	100
	Average for 1961-1970		68.48	13.51	0.95	8.53	8.53	100

Source: The Trade Report 1973 (Parliamentary Paper No.21 of 1974).

But if these export figures show one aspect of Fiji's participation in the world economy, the import figures show another. Table 5.3 expresses the total imports, exports and domestic exports as percentages of Fiji's total trade since 1934, though not including the war years 1939 to 1946[4]. The table clearly shows that whereas in the 1930's and the 1940's Fiji generally enjoyed favourable trade balances, since the 1950's her position has progressively deteriorated, so much so that in the year she achieved her political independence from Britain (1970), her total imports stood at $90,501,755 (59.23%), total exports at $62,306,995 (40,77%) and total domestic exports at $49,254,404 (32,23%), giving a balance of trade deficit of $28,194,769. But worse was still to come. In 1973, the last year for which figures are available, Fiji's imports exceeded her total exports by $100,219,020 or by almost twice the value of her total domestic exports for that year!

But while these figures are in themselves revealing, they do not help us to ascertain fully the wider implications and consequences that such participation in the world economy generates over time, and especially in the case of a small economy like Fiji's. It is largely for this reason that we discuss below the impact and consequences of international market, commodity prices and quotas on Fiji's economy and society.

That paricipation in the world economy necessarily leads to economic dependence on the outside world is a foregone conclusion. In the case of Fiji, however, it is not just a matter of participation

Table 5.3

Imports and Exports as Percentages of Total Visible Trade 1934 to 1973

Year	Total Trade	Total Imports	Total Exports	Total Domestic Exports
	$F	%	%	%
1934	4,903,318	40.59	59.41	54.73
1935	6,155,366	40.85	59.15	56.37
1936	7,274,562	41.29	58.71	55.63
1937	7,948,802	44.30	55.70	53.39
1938	8,420,932	39.79	60.21	58.40
1947	22,518,376	45.44	54.56	51.66
1948	27,468,692	43.28	56.72	53.68
1949	27,669,686	50.53	49.47	46.40
1950	29,545,002	47.12	52.88	48.09
1951	33,362,254	56.16	43.84	38.45
1952	46,013,340	52.20	47.80	42.90
1953	47,458,650	44.45	55.55	50.62
1954	45,765,572	50.88	49.12	43.54
1955	53,832,030	53.40	46.60	40.67
1956	55,390,308	59.33	40.67	33.95
1957	60,408,984	50.38	49.62	42.31
1958	64,309,368	54.74	45.26	38.08
1959	61,356,640	54.94	45.06	37.17
1960	63,839,940	51.39	48.61	40.04
1961	60,709,402	56.76	43.24	34.38
1962	66,263,644	52.48	47.52	37.71
1963	84,748,442	47.69	52.31	45.76
1964	107,480,844	51.41	48.59	43.02
1965	100,657,354	57.78	42.22	35.38
1966	89,458,770	56.50	43.50	36.05
1967	98,953,034	56.89	43.11	35.29
1968	117,520,340	58.20	41.80	33.39
1969	131,114,746	59.40	40.60	33.21
1970	152,808,750	59.23	40.77	32.23
1971	173,284,169	64.38	35.62	28.19
1972	197,131,856	66.73	33.27	26.27
1973	249,070,794	70.12	29.88	21.03

Source: Fiji Annual Reports; The Trade Report for 1973 (Parliamentary Paper No.21 of 1974).

Notes: The figures for total exports include both the total re-exports and the total domestic exports, i.e. the difference between total exports figure and the total domestic exports figure represents the total re-exports for that year.

and dependence but rather the extent of that dependence and the consequences that this generates at the internal level. We have already noted the extent to which Fiji's post-war domestic exports were dominated by sugar and copra, and especially by the former. But sugar and copra are not important only as export crops; a very high proportion of Fiji's total productive capacity is geared to the production of these export-oriented commodities.[5]

Table 5.4 clearly illustrates both the acreage devoted to the major crops produced in Fiji as well as the relative and absolute decline in the acres devoted to the production of crops other than sugar and copra in the post-war years. Whereas in 1958 some 78.33 per cent of land under crops was devoted to sugarcane and coconut, by 1968 this figure had increased to 84.85 per cent, with a corresponding decline in the acreage devoted to the production of food crops for local consumption, from 21.67 per cent in 1958 to 15.15 per cent in 1968. Yet, such a decline was also in the absolute sense; whereas the area devoted to food crops other than sugarcane and coconut was 82,130 acres in 1958, the acreage so devoted in 1968 was only 54,596 acres, or about 66 per cent of the 1958 figure - a factor which had direct effect on the content of food imports in the post-war years.

But if the area devoted to the production of sugarcane and coconut is one important indicator of the significance of these two export-oriented crops to Fiji's economy, the size of the population wholly or mainly dependent on the proceeds from these crops is another. As we have already shown in the previous chapter, Fiji's population [6] had increased rapidly since the 1920's. By 1946 it had increased to about 260,000, to 345,000 in 1956, and to about 500,000 in 1968.

Table 5.4

Total Acreage Under Crops
1958 and 1968

	1958		1968	
Crop	Acres	%	Acres	%
Sugarcane	128,863	34.00	131,138	36.38
Coconut	168,800	44.33	174,690	48.47
Bananas	5,000	1.32	1,864	0.52
Rice	31,200	8.23	24,353	6.76
Root Crops	35,933	9.48	20,054	5.56
All other	9,997	2.64	8,325	2.31
Total	378,993	100.00	360,424	100.00

Source: Burns Commission Report (Council Paper No. 1 of 1960); Annual Statistical Abstract, Fiji 1970-71; and the 1968 Agricultural Census, Bureau of Statistics, Fiji.

Yet, even in 1968 some 51 per cent of Fiji's population was still directly dependent on agriculture, and the majority of these on the proceeds from sugar and copra. Indeed, in 1968 sugarcane production alone employed about 40 per cent of the agricultural labour force and, through the sugar processing activities it generated, some 33 per cent of the labour force engaged in the secondary industry. Moreover, not only the actual number represented by this figure of 51 per cent was much larger in 1968 than ever before, the agricultural sector as a whole employed about 60 per cent of Fiji's total occupied population.

It is in the light of these heavy internal commitments and the continued reliance on the proceeds from these two dominant export-oriented crops that Fiji's dependence on the world market becomes most meaningful and significant. But as we have noted from our discussion in chapter three, Fiji's economy has long been dependent on a market that has never been dependable and over which Fiji never had any control. And this has been especially true in the case of the international sugar and copra markets. In this, both the rise and fall in commodity prices, and the imposition of a quota system, have been a source of constant scourge to an economy almost wholly dependent on returns from the sale of only one or two crops.

Since the depression of the 1930's, when the price of raw sugar in the London market was at its lowest (table 3.4), Fiji's sugar exports became tied under "Imperial Preference" to the British market. In 1940, however, this scheme was replaced by war-time arrangements, which later became incorporated into the Commonwealth Sugar Agreement (CSA) under which Britain agreed to buy a fixed tonnage of Fiji sugar at a fixed price. In 1951, this scheme was itself incorporated into the International Sugar Agreement (ISA), under which Fiji was allocated a quota which she was not to exceed - a factor which directly contributed to the closure of the Nausori sugar-mill.

However, both fluctuating and fixed prices as well as quotas had adverse effects on Fiji's economy. Under the free floating prices of the 1920's and especially of the 1930's, for instance, the price of sugar had fallen well below the cost of production, and the industry was saved only because Britain needed an assured supply of sugar from her colonies.

And it was this policy which dominated the international sugar market throughout the post-war years, and led to the adoption of a quota system, first under the CSA and later under the ISA. Under both the CSA and ISA quota system Fiji could sell sugar only to the extent of her quota, though at guaranteed prices. However, the continued expansion of the area under sugar cane together with the introduction of new high-yielding varieties of cane meant that by the late 1950's Fiji's sugar production had considerably exceeded the specified quota tonnage. And now being left without additional market outlet, the CSR Company not only restricted her purchases of cane throughout the sugarcane belt, but also took the opportunity to close her oldest sugar mill at Nausori. And though it was the quota system established under the CSA and ISA which had led to the mill closure, the CSR Company justified her action on the ground that the wet climate of the Nausori area adversely affected the sucrose content of the cane grown there and therefore it was no longer economical to operate the mill. The mill had been in operation since 1882.

Fortunately for Fiji, the ISA quota system collapsed soon after Cuba's refusal to abide by its quota in 1961. The United States embargo on Cuban sugar meant, that with other sugar producing countries, most of Fiji's surplus over and above the CSA quota were chanelled to the U.S. market under a free price system[7]. But by 1967 the free price system fell to as low as $26.40 per ton CIF, and only moving up slightly to $34 per ton CIF in 1968.

The 1967 free market price of $1.32 per cwt. CIF was the lowest sugar price in the post-war years, even when not allowing for the high rates of post-war inflation. Indeed, in terms of current prices the 1967 free price was about equal to the 1927 average price of raw sugar in the London market (see table 3.4, Chapter Three). That the 1967 free price was well below the cost of production is clearly illustrated by the fact that while in 1927 it took a farm labourer about ten days to earn $1.32, in 1967 a similar amount could be easily earned in about five hours. Therefore in terms of constant prices, the 1967 free market price of sugar was perhaps as low as or even lower than those prevailing in the depression years of the 1930's.

That the Fiji sugar industry managed to survive the 1960's was largely due to the fact that throughout the greater part of that decade Fiji was able to sell about 50 per cent of her sugar to Britain and Canada under the CSA, and at an average price of about $95 per ton CIF, which was about 3 times higher than the 1967 free market price. But as will be shown in the following section, it was the bulk of Fiji's sugarcane farmers rather than the CSR Company who shouldered the main burden arising from the ups and downs of the international sugar market throughout the post-war years.

Like sugar, copra has been subject to market instability for decades. In the case of coconut products, however, no quota or fixed price arrangements have been possible over the years. As early as 1919 one observer described the labour, production, costs, prices and copra market instability in the following terms:

> "The fallen nuts are gathered by Indian men and

> women, are cracked open with a strong blade, the kernal scooped out with a sheath knife and left in the sun to dry, and the resulting copra is then collected into sacks and exported to the great markets of the world.
>
> ---- copra has been selling in Fiji recently (September, 1919) at £34 per ton, and in London at £58 per ton. And the planters have been growing and harvesting it at £6 per ton.
>
> ---- (But) coco-nut has its hurricane, its blights and its capricious market. Even at the moment of writing comes the cable announcement that copra has dropped £9 a ton in a few hours."[8]

As table 5.5 clearly shows, these ups and downs in copra prices have continued into the post-war years, with Britain, Europe, North America, and Australia still being the main buyers of Fiji copra and coconut products. And as we have already noted, while the commitment of land resources and human dependence on coconut products have been increasing in significance, the contribution of coconut products in the total domestic exports has been progressively declining, making Fiji mainly a mono-crop export-oreinted economy.

Moreover, the increase in land and human resource commitment on one or two export-oriented crops has over the years made Fiji progressively dependent not only on export incomes but also on imports. In particular, the decline in the acreage devoted to food crops for local consumption since 1958 has meant that Fiji had to rely more heavily on imported food. To be sure, with the dominance of sugar and copra, Fiji became dependent on foreign food products rather early. In 1934 some 22.38 per cent of her imports consisted of food, drink, and tobacco.[9] The import figures for these items were 20.02 per cent in 1938, and averaged about 20 per cent thereafter to the end of the

Table 5.5

Average Price Per Ton of Copra Exported from Fiji
1938-1970

Year	Price per ton $F (f.o.b.)	Year	Price per ton $F (f.o.b.)	Year	Price per ton $F (f.o.b.)
1938	16.19	1953	143.38	1961	92.66
1946	46.59	1954	153,65	1962	97.08
1947	70.30	1955	145.96	1963	108.22
1948	93.41	1956	131.27	1964	114.38
1949	104.79	1957	118.53	1965	139.68
1950	107.19	1958	118.21	1966	113.26
1951	118.10	1959	156,10	1967	119.58
1952	141.76	1960	139.73	1968	158.32
				1969	130.74
				1970	150.36

Source: Fiji Annual Reports, and Current Economic Statistics, Bureau of Statistics, Suva, October, 1974

Notes: (a) Prices for 1938 to 1960 inclusive have been calculated from the actual quantity and value of exports during these years - it does not show what the producer's received.

(b) Figures for 1961 to 1970 relate to first grade copra only and they refer to average prices paid to producers at Suva after deductions for freight, wharfage, shrinkage penalty, and taxes have been allowed.

colonial rule. But the decline in the acreage devoted to the production of food crops for local consumption in recent decades has led to imports of food that could be easily produced within the country. This trend has been particularly evident in the case of rice. Until 1948 rice was not an import item. Since 1958, however, rice has constituted about 10 per cent of the total food imports.

But the increasing economic dependence on the world economy which Fiji's participation in the world trade has brought about has also been accompanied by dependence on other economic areas. In this the role of the increasing balance of payment deficits which we have noted in Table 5.3 has been most crucial. In order to pay for these progressively increasing trade deficits, Fiji had to attract more and more foreign capital in the form of both private investment capital, and loans and aids. And this, of course, meant that in the post-war years Fiji increasingly became a haven for foreign investors and speculators, including thousands of tourists who frequent the islands every year. We discuss the consequences of these on Fiji's economy and society in the following section:

(b) Some Consequences of Economic Dominance

As we have shown in the above section, although Fiji's internal commitments and dependence on export-oriented agriculture have been relatively high, the size of her principal exports has been too small to have any influence on the external markets. Especially in the case of sugar and copra, there were too many producers who have been competing in the same market - a market in which the metroplitan consumers have always set the price level. In other words, like numerous other producers of such commodities, Fiji has been increasingly participating in a world economy on unequal terms. Over the years, and especially in the post-war period, such participation has resulted in continued balance of payment difficulties, with the price of manufactures from the metropolitan countries rising at a faster rate than that of her export commodities.

Therefore, increasingly faced with balance of payment deficits, and with no extra internal resources to meet them, Fiji had to attract foreign loans, aids and, above all, foreign private capital for investment. But continued foreign investment in the form of foreign-owned enterprise meant continued metropolitan economic dominance and control at the internal level. And it is to a discussion of foreign economic dominance at internal level and the consequences they had on Fiji's post-war colonial economy and society that we now turn.

(i) Foreign Ownership and Control

The extent of foreign economic dominance in Fiji's post-war colonial economy is clearly indicated by the extent to which the local economic areas and/or resources were owned and/or controlled by foreigners, either directly or through the operation of foreign-based firms. More specifically, it is the extent of foreign penetration in export-oriented agriculture, industry and trade, banking and finance, the professions, the civil service, and services such as tourism that provide the most meaninful index of foreign economic dominance at the internal level.

In an earlier chapter (Chapter Three) we have already discussed the introduction and expansion of some of the larger foreign-based firms operating in Fiji during the pre- and inter-war years. However, these multinational firms, and especially the CSR Company, Burns Philp (South Seas) Company Limited, and the Carpenter Group of Companies, all being subsidiaries of Australian-based companies, continued their operation and expansion throughout the post-war colonial period. But as we noted in the preceding chapter, the post-war period was characterized by a rapd diversification in economic activities, especially at the secondary and the tertiary levels. As a result, in the 1950's, and especially in the 1960's, Fiji saw a rapid increase in the number of firms engaged in diverse economic activities.

Table 5.6 gives a breakdown of the number of companies registered at the end of each year from 1961 to 1973. While at the end of 1961 there were only 314 companies, by 1973 this number had risen by 5.5 times, to 1,704. But while the greatest increase was in the number of firms with head office and capital in Fiji,[10] the number of firms with head office and capital abroad had also increased markedly, from only 77 in 1961 to 209 in 1973. In the year of Fiji's "Independence" (1970), Australian-based companies made up about 40 per cent of all foreign-based firms operating in Fiji, and similar figure for United Kingdom-based firms was 25 per cent, while the remainder were firms with head office and capital mainly in the United States, New Zealand, and Japan.

But the number of foreign-based firms operating in a country is of itself a poor indicator of the extent of foreign economic dominance at the internal level. In the case of Fiji, we have already shown how one large foreign-based firm, namely the CSR Company of Australia, dominated Fiji's economy in the pre- and inter-war years. It is for this reason that we discuss below the extent of foreign penetration in the more important sectors of Fiji's economy.

However, any discussion of the extent of foreign penetration and dominance in Fiji's post-war colonial economy must necessarily discuss

Table 5.6

NUMBER OF COMPANIES REGISTERED AT THE END OF EACH YEAR

YEAR	NEW REGISTRATIONS DURING THE YEAR	HEAD OFFICE AND CAPITAL IN FIJI		HEAD OFFICE AND CAPITAL OVERSEAS			TOTAL REGISTERED AT THE END OF YEAR
		PUBLIC COMPANIES	PRIVATE COMPANIES	IN UNITED KINGDOM	IN AUSTRALIA	OTHER COUNTRIES	
1961	34	18	219	27	28	22	314
1962	36	18	239	27	30	26	340
1963	45	20	279	27	30	29	356
1964	46	21	320	27	31	32	431
1965	58	20	361	30	35	34	480
1966	59	21	382	30	37	32	502
1967	90	21	442	30	37	34	564
1968	108	21	503	33	44	40	641
1969	152	24	494	36	53	46	653
1970	206	28	805	38	60	53	984
1971	197	30	1,000	38	67	60	1,195
1972	241	33	1,236	37	71	79	1,456
1973	285	43	1,452	41	81	87	1,704

Source: Registrar of Companies, and Current Economic Statistics 1974, Bureau of Statistics.

Note: The number of companies registered at the end of each year is the sum of existing companies at the end of the previous year and the new companies registered during the year minus the number of companies struck off the register. These new companies may not necessarily be operating and hence there is a difference between the number of trading enterprises and the number of companies which appear on the register.

the role of three large Australian-based multinational corporations and their subsidiaries in Fiji. These corporations are the Colonial Sugar Regining Company Limited (CSR), W.R Carpenter (Holdings) Limited, and Burns Philp Co. Ltd. (B.P.). We attempt to show briefly the extent of their hold on Fiji's economy during the post-war colonial period.

The Colonial Sugar Refining Company Limited

Since its arrival in Fiji in 1882, the CSR Company's hold on Fiji's economy had been considerable. Only in the post-war years, with the expansion of Fiji's economy and the consequent influence of other foreign-based large corporations that its relative dominance had somewhat declined. Yet its post-war position still remained significant.

It derived its economic strength from mainly two sources. Though it had been the largest buyer of Fiji's sugarcane and the main producer of Fiji's sugar since 1882, from the early 1920's it held complete monopoly over Fiji sugar processing and marketing. Moreover, as we have already shown in the two preceding chapters, it alone owned about 1.7 per cent of Fiji's land as freeholds and thousands of acres of native land as leases. As such it had control over the greater part of Fiji's most valuable cane-growing land. Therefore, through its ownership and control over sugarcane land and its monopoly position in the manufacture and marketing of sugar, the company was able to exert considerable economic power over both the sugarcane farmers and the sugar-mill workers. And when we consider that in the 1960's sugar and molasses averaged some 68.8 per cent of Fiji's total domestic exports, the CSR Company's control over Fiji's economy was indeed significant.

But the most interesting aspect of the CSR Company's operation, however, lay in the manner in which it exploited Fiji's cane-growers, and through them Fiji's economy and society as a whole. From 1961 to 1969, for instance, the economic relationship between the company (as millers) and the sugarcane farmers was governed by what has been called the "Eve Formula," named after the chairman of the commission" which recommended that formula in 1961. An explanation of that rather complex formula is given as Appendix II to this thesis.

In essence, under that formula the total proceeds of sugar was divided into two parts after the total costs of production of the company (not including the farmers' costs of production) was allowed. In practice the company's cost of production constituted about 25 per cent of the total sugar proceeds. The remaining 75 per cent was divided between millers (about 15 per cent) and the growers (about 60 per cent)[12]. What the application of such a formula meant to the growers and the millers can be clearly illustrated with reference to the distribution of the total sugar proceeds of the 1968 season.

In 1968 the total proceeds was $30,541,307. The sugar making costs totalled $7,539,163 or 24.69% of the total proceeds. The total share to be divided between the millers and the growers was therefore $23,002,144 or 75.31% of the total sugar proceeds. The millers' share was $4,647,251 or 15.22%, while the growers share was $18,354,893 or 60.09% of the total sugar proceeds[13].

The above figures, however, call for further interpretation. For instance, it should be noted that the sugar making costs included every aspect of the cpmpany's costs of production, including depreciation of capital goods. Therefore, the $4,647,251 which the company received as its share in 1968 was its actual net profit. On the other hand, the 60.09% which some 15,000 farmers received as their share was inclusive of the costs of production of sugarcane.

In 1959 the CSR Company had revalued its assets by over twice their value before revaluation, from $11,096,728 to $22,539,052. Yet, even in spite of this rather inflated revaluation figure[14], the company's 1968 profit was about 20.62 per cent of those assets. Moreover, though the company never revealed the total issued capital it employed on its Fiji venture, it is clear that such a figure would have been considerably lower than the book-value of the company's assets stated above. Hence, given the size of the company's profits in the 1960's, the yearly return on the capital invested would have been enormous. And the company had been operating in Fiji since 1882!

W.R. Carpenter (Holdings) Limited and Burns Philp Company Limited

As in the case of the CSR Company, the above two Australian multinational corporations made their entry into Fiji rather early, in 1914 and 1920 respectively. Their penetration of the Fiji economy, however, became increasingly conspicuous in the post-war years. And by the end of the colonial rule, these two corporations between them exercised full or part ownership rights and control over some 40 influential companies operating within Fiji.

Table 5.7 helps to illustrate clearly the extent of W.R. Carpenter(Holdings) Ltd's equity ownership in companies operating in Fiji. Table 5.8 serves a similar purpose in respect of Burns Philp Company Limited. The companies listed in these two tables are some of the largest and most influential generally and in their respective fields within Fiji, and either individually or in combination these companies have penetrated most of the growth areas requiring large-scale investments. At both the secondary and the tertiary levels, their penetration have been so wide-ranging and deep that almost no local firm can hope to survive without dealing with some of them. In other words, during the post-war years the subsidiaries of these two multinationals have almost completely monopolized and dominated the greater part of Fiji's business world.

Nevertheless, a few important economic sectors have survived the post-war penetration by the three corporations discussed above. Of these, tourism and banking are perhaps the most important. Yet, even these two areas are almost wholly dominated by foreign-based firms. In the case of tourism, for instance, it has been estimated that about 95 per cent of the companies operating in Fiji have office and capital abroad. And in the case of the commercial and trading banks, during the colonial period both ownership and control have been entirely foreign. This trend is becoming still more marked in the post-colonial period

Such a high level of foreign economic dominance, however, has both its causes and consequences. In general, it reflects the contradiction inherent in the colonial economic policy. We saw in the above

Table 5.7

Ownership and Control by W.R. Carpenter(Holdings)Ltd.

Name Ref.	Name of the Company	Equity Ownership Held by	%
A	W.R. Carpenter(Holdings)Ltd		
B1	Southern Pacific Insurance Co. Ltd	A	60.00
B2	Carlton Brewery(Fiji)Ltd	A	50.00
B3	W.R. Carpenter(South Pacific) Ltd	A	99.70
C1	Island Industries Ltd	B3	99.40
C2	Pacific Shipowners Ltd	B3	100.00
C3	Suva Motors Ltd	B3	100.00
C4	Millers Ltd	B3	99.90
C5	Morris Hedstrom Ltd	B3	99.70
C6	Carpenters Fiji Ltd	B3	99.40
D1	Coral Island Traders Ltd	C4	100.00
D2	Young's Electroplating Co. Ltd	C4	100.00
D3	Mainline-Millers Construction Co. Ltd	C4	50.00
D4	George and Ashton(P.I.) Ltd	C4	50.00
E1	Bure Advertising Ltd	C5	100.00
E2	Kanacea Ltd	C5	100.00
E3	Woolworth's Ltd	C5	100.00
E4	Fiji Pastrol Co. Ltd	C5	33.60
E5	Fiji Paints Ltd	C5	50.00
E6	Burns Philp(South Seas) Ltd	C5	0.08
E7	Wailekutu Meats Ltd	C5	50.00
F1	Island Transport Ltd	C6	100.00
F2	Austral Motors Ltd	C6	100.00
F3	Advanx Retreading	C6	100.00
F4	Fiji Industries Ltd	B3	7.60

Source: Fiji: A Developing Australian Colony, pp.46-7 Publishers and Distributors: International Development Action, Victoria, Australia.

Notes: The reading of this table is illustrated with an example: For instance, F2 (Austral Motors Ltd) is owned 100% by C6 (Carpenters Fiji Ltd), which in turn is owned 99.4% by B3 (W.R. Carpenter (S.P.) Ltd), which in turn is owned 99.7% by A(W.R. Carpenter(Holdings) Ltd) of Australia.

Table 5.8

Ownership and Control by
Burns Philp Co. Ltd

Name Ref.	Name of the Company	Equity Ownership	
		Held by	%
A	Burns Philp Co. Ltd		
B1	Burns Philp Trustee	A	100.00
B2	Burns Philp(South Seas) Co. Ltd	A	70.90
		B1	1.20
B3	Queensland Insurance Co. Ltd	A	50.00
C1	Carpenters Fiji Ltd	B2	0.40
C2	Fiji Industries Ltd	B2	7.60
C3	Standard Concrete Industries Ltd	B2	4.70
		C2	33.00
C4	J. Lysaght(S.P.) Ltd	B2	19.50
C5	Wrought Iron & Steel Construction Ltd	B2	100.00
C6	Automotive Supplies	B2	100.00
C7	British Paints Ltd	B2	33.30
C8	Victoria Arcade Ltd	B2	50.00
		B3	50.00
C9	Bish Ltd	B2	100.00
C10	Travelodge Fiji Ltd	B2	18.50
		B3	14.80
C11	Corrie & Co. Ltd	B2	95.30
C12	Suva Glass & Mirror Co. Ltd	B2	100.00
C13	Car Rentals(Pacific) Ltd	B2	50.00
C14	Wailekutu Meats Ltd	B2	50.00
D1	Rock & Gravel(Fiji) Ltd	C3	100.00
D2	Concrete Supplies Ltd	C3	100.00
D3	Prestressed Concrete(Fiji) Ltd	C3	100.00
D4	Certified Concrete Products(Fiji) Ltd	C3	100.00
D5	Mau Quarries Ltd	C3	67.80
		C2	15.30
E1	Office Equipment Ltd	C5	50.00

Source: Fiji: A Developing Australian Colony pp.46-7
Publishers and Distributors: International Development Action, Victoria, Australia.

Notes: To be read as illustrated in the notes to Table 5.7

section how increasing participation in the world economy led to yet further participation and dependence on that economy. Such dependence and participation were clearly demonstrated in our discussion of import and export trades and internal commitments geared to such trade during the post-war years. But in order to meet the progressively deteriorating balance of payments deficits, the colonial government actively encouraged foreign private investment. And as we have shown above, the net result has been a progressive increase in foreign economic dominance at the internal level, a process which has led to still further deterioration in Fiji's balance of payments position.

Yet, despite this continuing unfavourable trend in Fiji's post-war economy, this stress on the necessity of foreign private investment has continued into the post-Independence period. Thus Fiji's Sixth Development Plan, covering the period 1971-1975, states that

> "the Fiji economy cannot achieve the desired rate of growth without substantial inflow of private capital for investment purposes, and that this flow will depend upon the maintenance of general conditions within the country conducive to such an inflow."[15]

Yet, if one of Fiji's desired development objectives is to use foreign private capital to help raise the standard of living of her people, the trends indicated by the inflow and outflow of capital, and especially the nature and the direction of foreign investments, leave much that is 'desired'. Indeed, the trends are most disconcerting, and even alarming.

In 1970 the Bureau of Statistics carried out a Survey of Overseas Investment. It estimated the 1970 inflow of private overseas capital at $9,251,500. Of this, however, only $5,296,100 or about 57.25 per cent constituted the actual investment capital inflow, the rest being retained profits. However, the amount stated as retained profit was a gross underestimate, since the foreign-based companies had already deducted and retained some 9.4 million dollars as depreciation. In other words, if retained profits are considered as a part of the total capital inflow, depreciation allowances form an equally effective source of investment. Therefore, the retained profits of the foreign companies was at least as high as $13.4 million. And therefore the investment capital actually generated by foreign companies within Fiji was at least twice as high as the amount actually came from the outside sources.

In a similar fashion, the 1970 survey estimated the "Income Payable Overseas" in that year at $7,723,300,which was as high as 83.48 per cent of the total inflow. But when expressed as a percentage of the actual inflow of 1970 investment capital, the net capital outflow exceeded the net capital inflow by 45.83 per cent! And at least 75 per cent of this outflow went to Australia.[16]

But if the excess of net capital outflow over net capital inflow is disturbing, the nature and direction of the inflow are alarming. For instance, according to Charles Stinson, the Minister of Finance, during the twelve months ending June 1973, about $26.2 million in capital flowed into Fiji. Of this, about $15.4 million or 58.78 per cent went into tourism, $6.2 million or 23.66 per cent into manufacturing, $4.1 million or 15.65 per cent into construction, and $½ million or 1.91 per cent into land development.[17] That the government's investment priorities are completely misplaced is clearly demonstrated by the fact that while about 59 per cent of foreign private investment found its way into the 95 per cent foreign-owned tourist industry, none went to the problem-infested agricultural sector.[18] And despite this, Fiji's Minister of Finance happily recommended that the Review of Fiji's Sixth Development Plan should be studied by all those "who have the interest of Fiji at heart."[19]

(2) Political Dependence and Political Dominance

We have already covered the essential aspects of Fiji's external political dependence in our discussion of her external relations (Chapter Three). In any event, and at least at the formal level, Fiji's image, and especially her status as a Crown Colony of Britain, remained very much the same throughout her entire colonial history. Moreover, during these decades, Fiji was wholly barred from any political participation at the international level, and any communication with Britain had to pass through the British colonial elite within Fiji. It is for these reasons that our present discussion focuses mainly on the nature and character of political dominance at the internal level.

(a) Some Consequences of Political Dominance

External political dominance in Fiji dates back to at least the beginning of the British colonial rule. At the constitutional level, it reflected in the type of representation and participation in Fiji's colonial Legislative Council accorded to various sections of Fiji's population.

Under the amended constitution of 1937, for instance, the Legislative Council consisted of the Governor as President, 3 _ex office_ members, 13 official members, 5 European members, of whom 3 were elected and 2 nominated, 5 Fijian nominated members, and 5 Indian members, of whom 3 were elected and 2 nominated. Voters for elected representatives had to be male, of 21 years of age and upwards, and had to pass certain property or income qualification.[20] The Fijians, however, were still represented by men chosen from a list of names submitted to the Governor by the Council of Chiefs. In the case of the Europeans and Indians, the nominations were made by the Governor on the advice of the Colonial Secretary.

And it was not until 1960, and not without considerable debate during the intervening two decades, that partial franchise was also extended to the Fijians; from 1960 they too could elect three of the five members. In the 1961 elections, therefore, Fijians voted their representatives for the first time. Moreover, during that year Fiji's women were also enfranchised.

Increased political participation, however, brought in further constitutional changes in a quick succession. In 1964, for instance, membership system was introduced whereby 3 elected Legislative Council members were placed in charge of Government departments. And as a result of the 1965 constitutional changes, from 1966 the Legislative Council consisted of 36 wholly elected representatives under a new electoral system. It was a system of communal roll (whereby voters of one race voted for candidates of that race) combined with a system of cross-voting (whereby Fiji was divided into three constituencies in which all electors voted for one Fijian, one Indian, and one General candidate).

This brief description of gradual constitutional changes, and especially of differential political participation based on racial inequality, clearly demonstrates the extent of powerlessness of the subject groups and the total political dominance of the British colonists. For instance, until the early 1960's, the number of official members of the Legislative Council always exceeded that of the unofficial members. Therefore, as evidenced by the numerous instances recorded in the Legislative Council debates, the official majority simply meant that no motion distasteful to the colonial government's interests could hope to pass through the Council.

Moreover, the unofficial members (both elected and nominated) were themselves divided by a racist constitution. In addition, the Indian demand for a more equitable land distribution and the Fijian fear of an increasing Indian population, had further helped to accentuate this division. As a result, only after the mid 1960's, when the Legislative Council became both equally and wholly represented by elected members of the three major racial groups, that any discussion on the question of Fiji's Independence became possible and successful.

Yet, despite her political Independence, Fiji's economy and society had already entered a new phase of capitalist domination - from colonialism to neo-colonialism.

III Conclusions:

This chapter has attempted to show in historical reference the manner in which Fiji's continued dependence upon and dominance by the metropolitan capitalist countries have necessarily set in motion a process of underdevelopment from which Fiji has yet to recover. More specifically, we have shown that Fiji's participation in and the consequent dependence upon the world economy has not only been increasing during the post-war decades, but also has led to important consequences at the internal level. In particular, we have shown that external economic dominance at the internal level, and especially the increasing foreign ownership and control over Fiji's resources, has tended to accelerate the process of underdevelopment of Fiji, in all major socio-economic and political spheres - even in the post-independence period.

Notes and References

1. Council Paper (C.P.) No.1 of 1960 p.35.

2. Fiji Annual Reports, 1937-1958.

3. The Trade Report (Parliamentary Paper No.21 of 1974).

4. The years 1942-44 also suffered balance of trade deficits, partly due to cane-farmers' strike and largely because Fiji had incurred a higher import expenditure.

5. Council Paper No.1 of 1960; Annual Statistical Abstract, Fiji 1970-71; and the 1968 Agricultural Census.

6. Refer to population table in Chapter IV.

7. Current Economic Statistics, Bureau of Statistics, Suva, pp.63-66.

8. W.A. Chapple, Fiji - Its Problems and Resources, London: Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd., 1921 p. 168-69.

9. Fiji Annual Report, 1934-1938.

10. It should be noted that Table 5.6 does not give us figures for the number of locally registered firms with 50% or less shares held by foreigners.

11. Report of the Fiji Sugar Inquiry Commission, Council Paper No.20 of 1961. Following this report the CSR Company placed its Fiji operation under a subsidiary company "South Pacific Sugar Mills Limited (SPSM).

12. The Award of the Rt. Hon. Lord Denning in the Fiji Sugar Cane Contract Dispute, 1969 - Supplement to the Fiji Royal Gazette pp.5-6.

13. South Pacific Sugar Mills Limited - Statement on 1968 season sugar proceeds.

14. Denning Award, p.9.

15. Fiji's Sixth Development Plan 1971-1975 p.31.

16. Survey of Overseas Investment, Bureau of Statistics, 1970.

17. Fiji Times, 28th July, 1973.

18. The issue as to the merits and demerits of tourism in the developing

countries has been a subject of intense debate for some years now. See, for instance, Tourism and Socialist Development, Tanzanian Studies No.3, edited by I.G. Shivji, Tanzanian Publishing House, 1973.

19. In the Preface to the Review of Fiji's Sixth Development Plan, 1971-1973.

20. Fiji Annual Report, 1938.

Chapter Six

Reactions of a Satellite Society

I Introduction:

That continued exploitation and oppression have been the lot of Fiji under colonialism has been amply demonstrated in the previous three chapters. Just as increasing inequality within Fiji has been the function of the process of uneven development, so the continued appropriation and transfer of resources from Fiji has been the function of the process of underdevelopment. The resulting conditions, however, were - continued oppression. But institutionalized exploitation and oppression have their reactions and counter-reactions. And Fiji has been having her share of these.

The basic aim of the present chapter is therefore to describe and discuss briefly the nature and character of some of the more important of these reactions and counter-reactions in the post-war Fiji. In other words, the chapter not only discusses the nature of the tensions and conflicts arising from the oppressive conditions of the 'fifties and the 'sixties, but also the nature of the actions taken to resolve them. The tensions and conflicts that we specifically discuss are those which culminated in the oil distribution industry strike of 1959 and the sugarcane growers' strike of 1960. In this context, reactions refer to both national and class conflicts which surface in the form of disputes and strikes, and counter-reactions refer to the methods adopted by the colonial government and other vested interests to resolve them.

II Tensions and Conflicts in the Post-War Years

As we have already shown in chapter three, during the inter-war years, and especially since the abolition of the Indian indenture system, disputes and strikes had become a powerful force in the industrial life of Fiji. They were not just symptoms of tensions and conflicts inherent in an exploitative system; they were increasingly seen and adopted as effective means of combating that system.

Up to the end of the Second World War, however, such disputes and strikes were largely confined to the sugar industry. But with the passage of the 1941 labour legislation, which for the first time provided for the registration and recognition of trade unions, there was a rapid increase in the number of trade unions. But along with this increase rose the number of disputes and strikes. Not only they became more numerous and frequent, but they also spread quickly to new sectors of Fiji's economy.

In 1941, for instance, there were only three registered trade unions, with numerous others in the process of formation, registration, and recognition.[1] This number, however, increased to 17 in 1947, to 40 in 1957, and by 1963 the number of registered trade unions had risen to 63. But while not all these trade unions were labour unions, by the late 1950's some 50 per cent of Fiji's wage workers were members of one labour union or another.[2] And even as early as 1947, the registered trade unions represented a variety of interests. These included aerodrome workers, commercial employees, firemen,motor drivers, government works employees, seamen, stevedores, teachers, sugar-mill workers, sugarcane farmers, and even dairy farmers. And the membership of these unions ranged from 50 to 4,000 workers.[3]

That the post-war industrial disputes were no longer confined to any particular industry, and that they were becoming numerous and frequent, can be clearly illustrated with reference to the events of the 1940's and the 1950's. Table 6.1, for instance, shows the number of major and minor disputes during the ten-year period, 1949 to 1958.

Table 6.1

Industrial Disputes 1949-1958

Year	Number of Major Disputes[(a)]	Number of Minor Disputes[(b)]
1949	1	97
1950	3	109
1951	1	148
1952	1	140
1953	2	160
1954	2	214
1955	7	250
1956	2	260
1957	3	228
1958	3	233

Source: Fiji Annual Reports and Fiji Department of Labour Annual Reports.

Notes: (a) Refers to industrial disputes involving strikes leading to work stoppages.

(b) Refers to industrial disputes of a minor character usually conciliated by the Department of Labour.

Whereas in 1949 there were only 97 minor disputes, the number of such disputes had been increasing rapidly and steadily over the years. By 1958 it rose to 233, to 500 in 1963, and to 1041 in 1966. Similarly, the number of disputes resulting in strikes and work stoppages were also increasing, the highest number being 14 in 1960.

By the 1950's, therefore, industrial disputes and strikes had become a common feature in Fiji's post-war economy. The most sensitive and strike-prone sectors, however, were the sugar, gold-mining, construction and distribution industries. These were the sectors which either had some of the largest number of employees, or were highly organized as trade unions. The sugarcane farmers' association is a good example of the latter type.

The demands of the workers involved in work stoppages and strikes varied considerably, from wage-claims, better working conditions, job security and fair treatment of workers, to claims for higher prices for their produce, and so forth. In 1947, for example, there were two notable disputes involving work stoppages.[4] The first occurred when the Nadi Aerodrome Workers' Union came out on strike and 368 men ceased work for two days. The immediate cause of the strike was the dismissal of two union workers. The main grievence, however, was that the Airport Authority was too prone to dismiss workers arbitrarily in the past and that the Authority tended to ignore the Union's past requests for the reinstatement of such workers.

In the case of the second strike, the situation was very much similar. About 1,000 Fijian employees at the Vatukoula gold-mines struck and all mining operations had to cease. During the strike there were several cases of intimidation, physical violence, and damage to private property belonging to the gold-mining companies. Once again, however, the immediate cause of the strike was arbitrary dismissal of a worker, and though his reinstatement was soon affected through conciliation, the strike continued for three days. In this instance, the workers did not belong to any labour union, though by the end of that year steps were taken to form a union.

The gold-mine workers, however, had several more strikes in the post-war colonial period. In the 'fifties, for instance, they had four strikes, including two in 1950, one in 1951, and a major dispute in 1955, when 1138 workers came out on strike and all mining works came to a halt for ten days. Similarly, the disputes between the CSR Company and its sugar-mill workers led to one three-day strike in 1950 and a series of work stoppages in 1957. Their 1957 strikes, however, involved a loss of over 20,000 man-days and eventually led to a Commission of Inquiry.[5] It should be especially noted that in the 1957 strike against the CSR Company both Indian and, to a lesser extent, Fijian workers were involved. Indeed, the 1957 strikes by the CSR Company mill-workers were not only cross-ethnic in character, and therefore essentially of a class nature, but also had links with communist parties abroad. The Commission was quite certain that someone within Fiji was connected with both the strikers and the Communist Party of Australia. That the Commission was correct in its belief was confirmed by publication of articles sympathetic to Fiji strikers in two leading Australian "Communist" papers. The Melbourne Guardian, for instance, contained the following:

> "(From a Guardian Correspondent)
> The Guardian has received this on-the-spot story from Fiji, where sugar workers are struggling against the huge Australian monopoly, the Colonial Sugar Refining Co. With the people of Indonesia getting rid of the last remnants of Dutch colonialism, events in Fiji assume great importance."[6]

In a similar vein, the Sydney Tribune stated its support for Fiji workers as follows:

> "Support for Fiji Workers
> A resolution supporting the C.S.R. Strikers in Fiji was carried unanimously at the weekend meeting of the Central Committee C.P.A. Their resolution reads:-
>
> The present strike of the Fijian workers for a wage rate of 2/6 an hour from the Colonial Sugar Refining Company is a just strike commanding the forthright support of the labour movement of Australia.
>
> This meeting of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Australia expresses its support for the workers of the sugar monopoly in their demands for improved living standards.
>
> The working class of Australia have experienced the exploitation that the CSR has inflicted on them and well know the rapacious nature of its operations.
>
> We condem the repressive measures taken against the strikers and the use of police by the authorities and appluad the high display of unity maintained by the workers, which is enabling them to overcome obstacles and move forward to success in their struggle."[7]

By the late 1950's, therefore, the trade union movement had not only become well established in the industrial life of the colony, but also, in line with the objective conditions of the time, had also acquired a cross-ethnic character. It is within the context of these developments that we briefly describe and discuss below the reactions and counter-reactions as displayed during two major strikes of the post-war colonial period, one in 1959 and the other in 1960.

III Reactions and Counter-Reactions

We describe and discuss these two strikes for a variety of reasons. The 1959 strike was in the tertiary sector, in the distribution industry, and the dispute had come about as a result of workers' dissatisfaction over wages and wage-rates. The 1960 strike was in the sugar industry, and in the primary sector. The small-scale cane farmers were becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the price of the cane they produced. In both instances the companies against whom the strike actions were taken were foreign-owned.

Our main objective, however, is twofold: First, at the level of workers' and producers' reactions, we wish to illustrate the nature of consciousness and solidarity among them. Second, at the level of counter-reactions, we wish to show how the colonial government and the multinational corporations acted in unison and in the interests of the foreign-based companies. We discuss each of the two strikes in turn.

(a) The 1959 Strike

The 1959 conflict in the oil distribution industry began when about 250 workers employed by the Shell Company (Pacific Islands) Limited and the Vacuum Oil Company ceased all work on the morning of 7th December.[8] These workers were members of the Fiji-wide Wholesale and Retail Workers' General Union, which in turn was affiliated to the Fiji Industrial Workers' Congress set up in 1954.

Though the log of claims included other conditions of employment, the immediate cause of the strike was the breakdown in negotiations between the Union and the oil companies over wage-rate.[9] Prior to the strike, the workers had demanded a minimum wage-rate of £6 per week. The oil companies, however, offered to increase the existing minimum wage of £3-0-6 per week to £3-10-0 per week. The Union found this offer unacceptable. And the strike that followed the breakdown in negotiations continued until 12th December, when an arbitration awarded the workers with a reasonable increase, from the existing minimum to £4-11-0 per week.

The series of events which occurred during the course of this strike, however, were numerous and complex and therefore only some of the more important aspects are presented here. First of all, it should be especially noted that the strike was in a key distribution industry, and at all major distribution points, both within the City of Suva and at other important urban centres. Moreover, because of careful advance organization and planning, the strike occurred at all points suddenly and simultaneously. The government authorities, and especially the oil companies, were officially informed of the strike only minutes before it actually began.

At first the strike was quite peaceful and the transport system was running on schedule. The Commissioner of Police had already inspected the Union's pickets during the first morning of the strike and was satisfied that they were acting peacefully. Moreover, in his letter giving notice to the oil companies, the Union Secretary had already stressed his intention to maintain the 'essential services' during the course of the strike. The strike, however, became a show of strength and determination by the strikers and their sympathizers on the one hand, and the oil companies and the colonial government on the other. Their interests were directly opposed. The oil companies, backed by the colonial government, remained adamant that the strikers should resume work before negotiations could commence, and the workers insisted on negotiations before the resumption of work.

Though by the evening of the first day it was reported that tension was rising in Suva, no serious incident had occurred during the first day. On the following morning, however, the government held a meeting presided by the Governor, and at 4 p.m. the government issued a statement to the press and the Fiji Broadcasting Commission. A copy of the full text of the statement is attached as Appendix III of this thesis.

After the announcement of the full statement, the radio from time to time repeated the government position in the following form:

> "Finally the Government of this Colony wishes to give a clear and unequivocal statement on its views on the strike -
>
> (1) the strike should not have taken place;
>
> (2) Workers should resume work and enter into negotiations immediately afterwards;
>
> (3) If the negotiations are not successful the assistance of the Labour Department should be sought."[10]

Such a statement, of course, was a clear indication that the colonial government was on the side of the employers. And the Union, the strikers, and even the sympathizers of the strikers, interpreted it so.

This action by the government was further complicated by others, all of which were clearly opposed to the interests of the strikers. For instance, at a meeting on 9th December between government representatives and those of the oil companies, it was decided that the latter should deliver petrol to four petrol stations in Suva under government protection. When put into practice, both the strikers and many members of the public who had by then begun to sympathize with them, together began to intercept and obstruct delivery efforts. These delivery efforts were largely frustrated and many police were stoned severely. The full text of the decision taken at that meeting is attached as Appendix IV to this thesis.

To make matters worse, later that afternoon the Union Secretary (Mr. James Anthony) was refused police permission to hold a meeting in the open in an effort to subdue the strikers. A large crowd, including many sympathizers, had already gathered in anticipation of the meeting. And when the police used tear gas to disperse the gathering, the crowd went completely out of control.

From the 9th until 12th December, therefore, there was considerable anti-government and anti-foreign company uprising throughout Suva. There was much damage to private property. The damage, however, was selective. The public anger was directed mainly to damaging buildings owned by the larger employers, including some government offices. Some colonial officials and police, however,were also assaulted.

There are two points about these assults and damages that deserve a special mention here. First, the assault on the police and damages to government property were clear evidence of strong anti-colonial government feelings - a strong sign of nationalism. Second, the heavey damages inflicted on the private property of the larger employers were equally clear evidence of the class nature of the conflict. Yet, despite these clear evidence of the nature of the conflicts, the Commission interpreted them to be racial in character, that the conflicts arose from anti-European feelings.

That the Commission's conclusions were based on evidence that were more apparent than real should be obvious. In the case of damages to private property, for instance, most of the larger employers were foreign -based companies, and these were invariably European-owned. Hence, it was easy for the Commission as well as for the then Mayor of Suva,[11] (whose interpretations have been reproduced in the Appendix V to this thesis .) to interpret the conflict as arising from anti-European feelings. In the case of the assault on the police, it should be noted that they were acting on the dictates of the colonial officials at a time when almost all the senior officials were recruited from outside Fiji and were invariably European in origin.

It should be further noted that this was one strike in which both the Fijian and Indian public participated and were fully united aganist foreign employers and the colonial government. And between the 10th and 12th December, when an agreement between the Union and the oil companies was finally reached, it could be said that the colonial government was virtually held at bay.

(b) The 1960 Cane Strike

The 1960 sugarcane strike was somewhat different in character then the one we have just discussed above. It was a dispute in the sugar industry between the CSR Company, which held a monopoly position in the processing and marketing of sugar and purchase of cane, and the cane growers, over the terms of an agreement for the purchase of cane.[12] The earlier agreement had expired on 31st May, 1960 and the two parties could not reach agreement on a new contract.

In essence, the dispute arose from the cane growers' demand that the cane price should reflect an improved share of the total sugar proceeds and the millers' refusal to concede any change. In the event, a large section of the cane growers, led by one of the farmers' Unions, the Maha Sangh, refused to cut cane. The crushing season, which normally starts at the end of May, was therefore delayed until October, when the government used security forces to break the strike.[13]

During the strike, however, there were many cases of intimidation, damage to property, and cane-burning. Moreover, as a result of the strike, the growers had lost an estimated $1,800,000 and the millers about $1,200,000. In addition, the colonial government had lost large revenue in taxes. The dispute, however, led to a Commission of Inquiry, the result of which is discussed below.

The result of the Fiji Sugar Inquiry Commission (known as the 'Eve Commission'), however, was most disappointing to the sugarcane farmers. It was this contract, its content, and its implications that we discussed in the preceding chapter. The cane growers were obliged to accept this contract for ten years (see an explanation of the 'Eve Formula' attached as Appendix II to this thesis.

The Eve Formula, which basically protected the millers from any financial risk and which had the effect of passing all financial risks and uncertainties on the growers, was for the farmers a bitter pill to swallow. In other words, though the tension and conflict did not again surface into open hositlity until the expiry of the Eve Contract in 1969, the relationship between the growers and the millers remained as strained and bitter as ever before.

It was upon the expiry of that contract in 1969 that 'the question of a new contract of general application'[14] was raised before the Sugar Advisory Council. The Council held several meetings but the two parties again failed to reach an agreement on the terms of a new contract. As a consequence, under the provisions of the Sugar Ordinance[15] an arbitrator (Lord Denning) was appointed to settle the dispute.

The result of this arbitration (referred to as the 'Denning Award') is most interesting. In resolving the complex issues of the sugar industry and settling the terms of a new contract, the arbitrator awarded a straight split of the total gross proceeds of sugar between the millers and the growers of 35 per cent and 65 per cent respectively, to be allocated to the growers according to the tons of cane delivered. This presented a marked contrast to the former Eve contract, since each party now had to meet its respective costs of production out of its respective basic share from the gross proceeds of sugar, molasses, and other by-products.

The "Denning Award," of course, had direct implications for the CSR Company's operations in Fiji. As we have shown in Chapter Five, the CSR Company had enjoyed considerable power and privileges in Fiji since the early 1880's. Since 1960, under the "Eve Contract," the company's total operation costs, and perhaps much more, were paid for from the total sugar proceeds before the 'cake' was actually divided between the growers and the millers. The share that went to the millers (about 15% after costs of production was deducted) was enormous by any standard - and it was a net profit at that. But with the "Denning Award," any possibility of such high profits were out of question. And since the company's exploitative activities in Fiji were now out in the open, the colonial government could no longer support it further.

And it was as a direct consequence of this award, and the eventual exposure of its activities, that the CSR Company decided that it was no longer a commercial proposition for that company to operate in Fiji. It left in 1973.

These reactions and counter-reactions in the industrial sectors of Fiji, however, were not unrelated to similar developments in other sectors. The trade union movement, for instance, was politically linked. This was particularly the case with the canegrowers' associations, especially the Maha Sangh and the Kisan Sangh, which had emerged as trade unions in the 1930's. For instance, the trade union leader who was associated with the 1943 and 1960 strikes was also a member of the Fiji Legislative Council during those periods. And it was largely because of the close links between certain professions, the sugarcane growers, and radical politics that the Eve Commission specifically recommended in 1960 that it be legislated that no lawyers be allowed to hold office with trade unions,[16] presumably because several Indian members of the Legislative Council were lawyers whose strength and, indeed, tenure of the Legislative Council seats depended almost entirely on their continued support of the cane-farmers and other workers in the cane-belt areas.

There was also a very close link between certain radical newspapers,[17] the sugarcane growers' associations, and the emergence of the National Federation Party. Indeed, the National Federation Party, which is presently the official opposition party, owes its origin to the larger canegrowers unions, and was openly supported by the Pacific Review (a weekly) in its efforts for constitutional reforms and Fiji's independence from Britain. And it was this Party whose members had walked out of the Legislative Council in 1967 because of disagreements over the issue of constitutional reforms - especially over the issue of common roll and Fiji's independence, both of which it supported.

****

Taken together, therefore, the two strikes we have described above, and numerous others which preceded and followed them, clearly illustrate the nature and content of the conflicts which characterized the post-war colonial period. More specifically, they help to show that there were two broad divisions along which conflicts became operative in practice. The conflicts between the employers and employees, for instance, were clearly of a class nature. But since the workers and small agricultural producers were well-informed and, consequently, well-aware of the fact that all large-scale employers were foreign-based capitalists, any large-scale conflict of a class nature almost inevitably acquired a nationalistic form as well. This was particularly evident from the selective damages to foreign-owned private property in Suva during the 1959 strike and uprising.

Moreover, such conflicts were further reinforced by the fact that in cases of serious strife the colonial government almost invariably sided with the employers, as in the case of the strikes in the oil distribution and the sugar industries. National and class antagonisms, therefore, remained almost inseparable parts of any conflict between the workers and the producers on the one side, and the foreign-based capitalists and the colonial government on the other.

During the colonial period, however, the development of both nationalism and class consciousness among Fiji's masses was considerably frustrated and impeded by the colonial government's continued emphasis on the racial factor. In particular, the racial inequality in land distribution, together with the relative differences in the population size of the two major races, were frequently used by the post-war colonial government as major tools, both for keeping the subject groups divided and for diverting their attention from continued foreign exploitation and domination.

Yet, in spite of this, and only months after the publication of the 'Denning Award' in January, 1970, the Indian and Fijian members of the Legislative Council unanimously agreed to seek Fiji's political independence from Britain.[18]

Notes and References

1. A new Labour Ordinance was enacted in 1947. It repealed and/or consolidated much of the previous labour legislation and gave statutory recognition to a number of international labour conventions. In particular, the Ordinance repealed all provisions allowing penal sanctions to be used against workers breaking their contractual obligations.

2. Fiji Annual Reports (F.R.) and Department of Labour Annual Reports.

3. F.R., 1947.

4. Ibid.

5. F.R., 1957 and the 'Report of the Commission of Inquiry into a Dispute between the Colonial Sugar Refining Company Limited and the Fiji Sugar Industry Employees' Association '(The Chini Mazdur Sangh, Fiji)', Council Paper No.3 of 1958.

6. Melbourne Guardian, 12th December, 1957.

7. Sydney Tribune, 18th December, 1957.

8. Details of this strike are to be found in the 'Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Disturbances in Suva, December 1959', Council Paper No.10 of 1960.

9. The Commission stated that the previous wage increase for the oil companies' workers was in 1955 and that since then the cost of living had risen appreciably. Moreover, no cost of living index existed in respect of Fijians, either for those in urban or rural area; most of the workers involved in the 1959 strike against the oil companies were Fijians, though a large number of people of other races were also involved.

10. This passage is taken from paragraph 12 of the Government's statement to the public (See Appendix III to this thesis).

11. The Mayor of Suva at the time was Charles Stinson, who is presently Fiji's Minister of Finance.

12. Annual Report of the Department of Labour, 1960; F.R., 1960; and the 'Report of the Fiji Sugar Inquiry Commission', Council Paper No.20 of 1961.

13. Legislative Council Debates, 1st October, 1960.

14. The Award of the Rt. Hon. Lord Denning in the Sugar Cane Contract Disputes 1969, p.1; and the 'Sugar Cane Contract Dispute Proceedings' Volume One (unpublished report), 1969.

15. This refers to Section 14(2) of the Sugar Industry Ordinance of 1961.

16. Council Paper No.10 of 1960.

17. The radical newspapers include the *Pacific Review*; *Jai Fiji*; *Jagriti*. These papers are published once a week; the latter two are in Hindi.

18. The decision to seek 'Independence' was held in complete secrecy. Members of the public were not consulted.

Chapter Seven

Summary and Conclusions

I Introduction:

There are three sections to this concluding chapter. The first section is essentially a summary of the main findings of this research. The second section briefly considers the future of capitalisim and imperialism in Fiji in the light of these findings. And, finally, the third section attempts to ascertain the contributions, if any, that these findings might make towards our understanding of the future of capitalism and imperialism in emergent nations.

II The Main Findings

In line with the basic objectives of this thesis, in the preceding five chapters we have examined and analysed some of the more critical events in Fiji's history from about 1800 to 1970. These events, their causes and consequences, and especially the socio-economic and political changes and conditions they produced over time, comprised the main foci of our study. The main results of this research are summarized as follows.

In Chapter Two, for instance, we showed the manner in which the somewhat self-contained and stable indigenous social structure underwent its first phase of drastic and irreversible changes under the onslaught of early imperialism from about 1800. Basic to this stage of socio-economic and political transformation, however, were two significant trends: the gradual weakening of the indigenous social structure which culminated in colonial rule in 1874, and the gradual emergence of an alien structure. These trends, however, were set in motion by a series of events which were basically external in origin. These included the advent of the sandalwood and beche-de-mer trades, the native socialization and conversion activities of the Christian missionaries, and the production of export-oriented agricultural commodities. It was largely the combined effects of these three events that led to the breakdown and the eventual subservience of native institutions and the gradual rise and dominance by alien institutions. In short, these two trends were the results of an interdependent process, wherein the decline of one set of institutions was dependent upon the rise of the other.

As we have shown in Chapter Three, however, by the beginning of the colonial rule, these two trends had reached a crisis point in Fiji's history.The imperialist activities prior to the advent of formal colonial rule had produced conditions which became the basis of a new set of developments. On the one hand, Fiji of the 1870's and 1880's had become increasingly dependent upon the outside world, and in particular on the vagaries of the foreign commodity markets. On the other hand, the need of the depressed planter class for cheap native labour had come into a direct conflict with the natives' inability to supply labour and the consequent Native Policy of the colonial government (See Chapter Four). It was this contradiction, brought to a head largely by earlier imperialistic activities, and the conflicts that it generated, that gave birth to new developmental trends.

The arrival of the Indian indentured workers and the Colonial Sugar Refining Company (Chapter Three), therefore, marked a new era in the socio-economic and political history of Fiji. Yet, as we have clearly shown, their introduction into the colony not only made possible the successive rationalization and expansion of the Fiji sugar industry, and the establishment of a highly profitable plantation economy, but also the intensely exploitative relationship in which they found themselves provided the very basis for the transformation of that economy. The almost continuous conflicts and changes which resulted from such economic relationships have been analysed in Chapters Three and Six.

Chapters Four and Five attempted to demonstrate the workings of Fiji as a subordinate capitalist society. Our findings indicate that during the post-war years Fiji had not only become a system of structured inequality (Chapter Four), but also a resourceful hinterland for appropriation and transfer of resources and surpluses to the metropolis (Chapter Five). Not that such situations did not exist in the earlier phases, but rather that they became highly structured and institutionalized in the post-war years. Indeed, our research findings suggest that Fiji's role as a capitalist satellite society had become increasingly contradictory and directly opposed to the aspirations and development of her own people. In brief, Fiji has been fully caught between the evils of uneven development from within and underdevelopment from without.

Our research findings, however, call for several further comments. First, our findings indicate that the institutional changes which accompanied the first phase of Fiji's exposure to imperialism had a devastating effect on the overall socio-economic and political structures of the pre-imperialist indigenous society. Perhaps most central to such institutional changes was the transformation of the traditional mode of production, distribution, and exchange, and the consequent changes in the relations to the means of production, distribution, and exchange. In the context of these institutional changes, and especially those in the economic sphere, any argument to the effect that Fiji's economy and society are essentially traditional in character is no longer tenable. Indeed, even as early as the 1880's Fiji's dominant socio-economic and political institutions were essentially external in origin. And they were even more so in the post-war years.

Second, our findings suggest that despite these shifts and changes in Fiji's economy and society since about 1800, there has been a marked continuity in the overall direction of such changes and developments. Two interrelated features are most conspicuous and they are especially worthy of note. There has been, for instance, a marked continuity in pressures and influences exerted directly from the outside, such as foreign market influences; and the continuity in the dominance of the outside forces at the internal level, as exemplified by the continued presence of the colonial personnels and the British colonists and neo-colonists. Moreover, there has been a continuity of oppression and exploitation, which have changed only in the form of their operation, from being more conspicuous and less systematic in the earlier phases to becoming more systematic and subtle in the post-war years. Such a transformation in the methods of oppression and exploitation over the decades merely reflects the changing nature of imperialism itself.

Third, from the findings of our study we can also conclude that in a colonial society stratified by a racial division of labour, racial exploitation is merely an additional dimension of exploitation of one class by another. In other words, even in the absence of a racially hetrogeneous society, similar conflicts between workers and employers would have been inevitable. As we have amply shown in Chapters Three and Four, in the case of colonial Fiji, socio-economic differences almost invariably coincided with racial boundaries. It was this feature of the colonial division of labour which for so long enabled the colonial government both to keep Fiji's society segmented and divided on issues of common importance, such as common roll, and to prolong the nationalist pressure for Fiji's independence.

III The Future of Imperialism in Fiji

Our views on the future of imperialism are necessarily pessimistic. Our research findings, and especially those relating to the post-war decades, leave little room for optimism. This conclusion is mainly derived from our analysis of Fiji's colonial history, and especially from two features basic to the capitalist structure of Fiji's post-war economy and society. One is related to the existing pattern of social-structural inequality, wherein the relative deprivation gap between the elite and the masses has been both cumulative and rising. The other is related to the ever-increasing dependence on the world economy and the consequent dominance through foreign ownership and control over the means of production, distribution, and exchange. In both instances the process is one of resource concentration into increasingly fewer hands. In both cases, however, the situation is, to say the least, bleak - and a bleak future for Fiji so long as these oppressive trends continue.

That these oppressive and exploitative conditions have continued unbroken into the post-independence period have been amply demonstrated in Chapter Five. The continued trend towards increasing dependence on foreign capitalist markets, on imports of foods as well as manufactures, on tourism, and on foreign capital and expertise at the internal level, are only a few of the numerous ways in which the character of Fiji's economy and society are now being continually and progressively shaped by forces external to Fiji. In short, the direction of Fiji's socio-economic and political development is still very much in the hands of the outsiders - perhaps much more now than ever before.

Yet, if Fiji's history is any guide, oppressive conditions have always erupted in conflicts among opposing interests. Therefore, the extent to which Fiji's people are likely to become masters of their own destiny will largely depend on the level of societal awareness that the masses are being exploited in the interest of the few - the few whose interests are not at all consonant with the interests and the long-term development objectives of Fiji and her people.

IV The Future of Imperialism in Emergent Nations

At a general level, the pattern of imperialistic activities, and particularly the content and direction that these activities gave to the economy and society of the now emergent nations, varied but little. During the early phase of imperialism, for instance, the form of exploitation was necessarily direct, individualistic, and entrepreneurial in character. Examples of such instances were the activities of the East India Company, the Dutch East India Company, and the Hudson Bay Company. In the case of Fiji, such activities were those of the sandalwood and beche-de-mer traders.

Commercial imperialism, however, gave way to industrial imperialism, a phase which was characterized by formal colonization of many parts of the world. It is in the colonial phase that a systematic change in the indigenous institutional structures occurred. And it is during this phase that the now emergent nations were systematically incorporated into the world economy, and an international division of labour occurred.

Today, inspite of their political independence, most of the emergent nations are still economically, and often socially and politically, dependent on the metropolitan countries. Their needs are similar, they often export the same commodities and, indeed, they often compete in the same capitalist markets. And the gap between the rich and poor nations continue to magnify. In these respects the political economy of Fiji provides a good example.

Appendix

Appendix I

A Form of Agreement for Intending Emigrants

(in force in Madras in 1912)

Fiji

Conditions of Service and Terms of Agreement which the Recruiter is authorized to offer on Behalf of the Agent to Intending Emigrants.

1. Period of Service.-Five years from Date of Arrival in the Colony
2. Nature of labour.-Work in connection with the Cultivation of the soil or the manufacture of the produce on any plantation.
3. Number of days on which the Emigrant is required to labour in each Week.-Every day, excepting Sundays and authorized holidays.
4. Number of hours in every day during which he is required to labour without extra remuneration.-Nine hours on each of five consecutive days in every week commencing with the Monday of each week, and five hours on the Saturday of each week.
5. Monthly or Daily Wages and Task-Work Rates.-When employed at time-work every adult male Emigrant above the age of fifteen years will be paid not less than one shilling, which is at present equivalent to twelve annas and every adult female Emigrant above that age not less than nine pence, which is at present equivalent to nine annas, for every working day of nine hours; children below that age will receive wages proportionate to the amount of work done.
6. When employed at task or ticca-work every adult male Emigrant above the age of fifteen years will be paid not less than one shilling, and every adult female Emigrant above that age not less than nine pence for every task which shall be performed.
7. The law is that a man's task shall be as much as an ordinary able-bodied adult male Emigrant can do in six hours' steady work and that a woman's task shall be three-fourths of a man's task. An employer is not bound to allot, nor is an Emigrant bound to perform more than one task in each day, but by mutual agreement such extra work may be allotted, performed and paid for.
8. Wages are paid weekly on the Saturday of each week.
9. Conditions as to return passage.-Emigrants may return to India at their own expense after completing five years' industrial residence in the Colony.

Appendix I-continued

10. After ten years' continuous residence every emigrant who was above the age of twelve years on introduction into the Colony and who during that period has completed an industrial residence of five years, shall be entitled to a free return passage if he claims it within two years after the completion of the ten years' continuous residence. If the Emigrant was under twelve years of age when he was introduced into the Colony, he will be entitled to a free return passage if he claims it before he reaches 24 years of age and fulfils the other conditions as to residence.

    A childof an emigrant born within the Colony will be entitled to a free return passage until he reaches twelve years of age,and must be accompanied on the voyage by his parent or guardian.

11. Other Conditions.- Emigrants will receive rations from their employers during the first six months after their arrival on the plantation according to the scale prescribed by the Government of Fiji at a daily cost of four pence, which is at present equivalent to four annas, for each person of twelve years of age and upwards.

12. Every child between five and twelve years of age will receive approximately half rations free of cost, and every child, five years of age and under, nine chattacks of milk daily free of cost, during the first year after their arrival.

13. Suitable dwelling will be assigned to Emigrants under indenture free of rent and will be kept in good repair by the employers. When Emigrants under indenture are ill they will be provided with Hospital accommodation, Medical attendance, Medicines, Medical comforts and Food free of charge.

14. An Emigrant who has a wife still living is not allowed to marry another wife in the Colony unless his marriage with his first wife shall have been legally dissolved; but if he is married to more than one wife in his country he can take them all with him to the Colony and they will then be legally registered and acknowledged as his wives.

(Also in Tamil and Telegu)

I agree to accept the person named on the face of this form as an Emigrant on the above conditions.

In my presence

Dated.............191

Registering officer

Recruiter for
Fiji Government Emigration
Agency

Source: Gillion, 1962:210-12

Appendix II

The Eve Contract

So, as events have turned out, under the Eve formula, the risk of loss is all on the growers. None at all on the millers: or, at any rate, none to speak of. After giving that big slice to the millers, the Eve Commission gave a formula for calculating the shares. This formula was very complicated. I will explain it as best I can by an illustration. Take the proceeds of sugar in a basic year as 100% received by the millers. Out of those proceeds the millers first take their big slice for their costs. The Eve Commission assessed that in a basic year that slice for 'costs' would be 30%, made up as 20% in 'the costs of manufacturing, transport and storing of sugar' (which I will call 'manufacturing costs'), and as to 10% in the cost of 'growers' services and cane transport' (which I will call 'growers' services). On that basis they recommended that the remainder of the cake (i.e. 70% of the proceeds) should be divided as to 57½% to the growers and 12½% to the millers. But they went on to deal with the years when that big slice for millers' costs was less (or more) than 30% of the proceeds. It turned out to be regularly less than 30%. Let us say it was only 26% in the current year. So that there would be a saving on the basic price of 4% on the millers' costs. And thus 4% more available for division. They then divided this 4% up between growers and millers according to whether the saving was on 'grower's services' or on 'manufacturing costs'. Let us suppose that 1% was saved on grower's services, and 3% on manufacturing costs. Then the growers' share (57½%) would be increased in the current year by two-thirds of the 1% saved on growers' services (that is, ⅔%) plus one-third of the 3% saved on manufacturing costs (that is, 1%), making 1⅔% extra for the growers. The balance of the 4%, namely 2⅓%, would be for the millers. So that proceeds of 100% would be divided as follows:- 26% to the millers for their costs: 57½% plus 1⅔% to the growers: 12½% plus 2⅓% to the millers.

'Growers' Services'

The whole of that complicated formula is founded on the assumption that there is a fundamental difference between 'growers' services' and 'manufacturing costs'. The Eve Commission stated as if it was obvious: '...the costs of growers' services and cane transport can be influenced very considerably by growers. The costs of manufacture, transport and storing of sugar can similarly be influenced by millers'. It was on that account that they provided in the formula that if there was any saving on 'growers' services', two-thirds of it benefited the growers: but, if there was any saving on 'manufacturing, costs, only one-third benefited the growers. By so doing, the Eve Commission thought that they would provide an incentive to the growers to save costs on 'growers' services': and for the millers to save costs on'manufacturing costs'.

Source: The Award of the Rt. Hon. Lord Denning in the Fiji Sugar Cane Contract Dispute, 1969, p.6

Appendix III

Government Statement on Strike of Oil Companies' Employees

At 8 a.m. on Monday, December 7th, the members of the Wholesale and Retail Workers' General Union employed by the Shell and Vacuum Oil companies went on strike. A notice of the strike dated December 5th was handed to the Shell Company a quarter of an hour before the strike began. No notice of the strike was given to the Labour Department whatsoever.

2. Prior to the strike there had been an exchange of correspondence between the Union and the Companies in which the Union had made claims and the Companies had made a counter offer. From this correspondence it would appear that there was a difference of opinion about the date on which negotiations were to take place but there was no refusal on the part of the Companies to negotiate.

3. About three weeks ago the Union Secretary consulted a Labour Department Officer about delay in arranging negotiations; apparently the employers had informed him that the matter has been referred to their head offices in Melbourne. The Officer advised the Secretary to write a polite note drawing attention to the delay and asking them to expedite matters. This the Secretary agreed to do. No further complaint was made to the Department of any later differences nor was any indication given that such differences were causing the Union serious concern. If such indication had been given the Labour Department would have been ready to approach the Companies.

4. The action taken by the Union Secretary is not only contrary to the advice given by the Labour Department but also flouts recognised industrial practices.

5. It is the accepted rule that a union does not call a strike until it has exhausted every possible avenue of avoiding it. Furthermore a responsible trade union does not give the employers only a quarter of an hour's notice of a strike. The inference must be drawn that this Union was determined on a strike. This is borne out by the circular letter it issued on the first day of the strike and which contained the phrase "This strike is a practical demonstration of our united strength which we have decided to use only after serious thought and careful planning".

6. The Companies have offered to enter into negotiations immediately work is resumed. The Union Secretary states that negotiations must take place before there is resumption of work, It is a generally recognised industrial attitude that negotiations of wages and conditions should not be made under duress by either employers or

Appendix III-continued

employees, that is either during a lock-out by employers or a strike by employees.

7. All the legislation which has been passed in the Colony, primarily designed for the protection of workers, is being set at nought. The result will be that the general public will be the principal sufferer.

8. The Union agrees that services listed as essential should be supplied with fuel but that is not sufficient to prevent grave danger to the general public if oil supplies generally are not available. Fuel is necessary for the transport lines which distribute food to the markets and stores. If these cease to function then people, including the strikers themselves, will go short of food.

9. The Government has a responsibility to protect services essential to the life of the whole of the people of the Colony and it intends to take every possible step to do so.

10. It advises all persons operating vehicles to exercise the strictest economy, avoiding all unnecessary mileage and, where possible, joining up with other transport users so that the maximum loading is obtained. It also advises operators of buses, food lorries and other vehicles employed on necessary work to use any special arrangements which may be made available.

11. The strikers are fully within their legal rights in peacefully picketing, that is peacefully persuading others not to work. But in persuading others not to work they are not within their lawful rights if they use violence or threaten violence, to any person or his family, either at or away from his place of work. Neither are they within their lawful rights in obstructing anyone. It is the duty of the Police to see that the laws are obeyed and they will fulfil that duty.

12. Finally the Government of this Colony wishes to give a clear and unequivocal statement of its views of the strike:-

    1. The strike should not have taken place.

    2. Workers should resume work and enter into negotiations immediately afterwards.

    3. If the negotiations are not successful the assistance of the Labour Department should be sought.

Source: Report of Commission of Inquiry into the Disturbances in Suva, December 1959 (Council Paper No.10 of 1960), p.35.

Appendix IV

Note of Decisions reached at Meeting held in the Office of the Assistant Colonial Secretary, 9 a.m., 9th December, 1959

Present:

Mr. J.A.C. Hill, Assistant Colonial Secretary (in the chair)
Messers. M.H. Helsen)
P. Darling) Shell Oil Co.
Griffiths)
Messers. J. Gough)
I. Riddle) Vacuum Oil Co.
The Commissioner of Police.

The Chairman prefaced the meeting by saying that it now appeared that James Anthony was seeking a face-saving formula by which the strike could be ended. However, the meeting should consider whether alternative means of distribution of petrol for essential services could be devised and he suggested that the basis of discussion should be that the oil companies had the responsibility-and the necessary expertise-of delivering oil and it was Government's responsibility to provide what protection it could to delivery operations.

2. The Meeting agreed to proceed on this basis.

SUVA

3. It was decided, in order to avoid dispersement of police manpower, that distribution should be made to four service stations only-

Niranjan's	Walu Bay
Central	Edinburgh Drive
Morris Hedstrom	Rodwell Road
Burns Philp	Margaret Street

Buses would use Niranjan's ; trucks, Central; private cars and taxis, Morris Hedstrom and Burns Philp.

4. The Companies agreed that they could find the tankers and drivers to carry out distribution of fuel to these points.

5. The Commissioner of Police outlined his arrangements for protection:
   (i) the three distribution centres in Suva would have a permanent four-man guard by day and a 10-man guard by night;
   (ii) these three points together with distribution points on the wharves would be covered over-all by a half-riot squad of 20 men;
   (iii) each delivery wagon would be manned by two special constables, provided delivery services were restricted to the above four selling points; and

Appendix IV-continued

(iv) each selling point would be manned by two police during the day;and

(v) distribution operations would be covered by another half-riot unit of 20 men.

6. Rationing-The question of rationing was discussed but it was decided not to introduce this, partly as a psychological measure to discourage hoarding, and because the companies were confident that given no interference or trouble with delivery vehicles, they could keep up a full supply to the four selling points.

7. Kerosene-While the committee appreciated the importance of this commodity in country districts, it was decided that special arrangements for delivery would not be made at this stage but that if the arrangements for deliveries of motor spirit proved effective the oil companies would at the first opportunity endeavour to distribute kerosene, if necessary in sealed tins ready for sale.

8. Payment-It was agreed that all purchases of petrol under the arrangements outlined above should be on a cash basis only.

9. Lautoka-It was agreed that deliveries of motor spirit would be made in Lautoka to two selling points, Burns Philp and Northwest Motors, on the same basis as in Suva, with the Commissioner of Police supplying men for protective purposes. The Commissioner also agreed to assist with two drivers should the oil companies experience difficulty in this direction.

10. It was agreed that the emergency arrangements should be restricted to Suva and Lautoka at this stage because of the difficulty in arranging manning for delivery vehicles and the necessary police protection.

11. Banana Shipments-The chairman asked if the companies could make deliveries of fuel to a vessel due to leave for Kadavu to collect bananas for the Tofua on Friday, 11th December, and whether it would also be possible to make deliveries in the Rewa Valley for the putputs used to bring bananas down the river. The companies agreed that with adequate protection it should be feasible to carry out these two tasks and they would endeavour to do so.

12. Public Announcement-The meeting decided that public announcement of the delivery arrangements should be deferred until first deliveries had been made to the selling points and that the announcements, which would be the responsibility of the oil companies, would merely state the plan, with no reference to its origin.

13. Resumption of Negotiations with Union-The companies agreed that they were willing to resume negotiations at the point they had reached before the strike took place, provided the union first of all resumed work.

14. Further Measures-The meeting agreed that no further emergency measures appeared necessary at this stage.

Source: Report of Commission of Inquiry into the Disturbances in Suva, December, 1959 (Council Paper No.10 of 1960) p.36.

Appendix V

Opinions of the Mayor of Suva, C.A. Stinson, on Damages to Private Property

"I looked very closely, at the time, at the pattern of destruction because I was naturally interested and I drove through all the streets on the early morning of the 10th, after examining my own premises. It did not take long for one to form a definite opinion on the pattern of destruction. To my mind it was centred near all European businesses. I say this because, to revert again to my own particular corner in the City, it was quite obvious that certain Indian and Chinese shops on the other two corners on which there was just as large a number of people assembled on the day, there was no damage. At the bus station we know that the kiosk owned by the part-European woman was smashed and looted, and the kiosk owned by Councillor Bidesi (an Indian) on the far end of the station I believe, had one small louvre of glass broken, although I din't personally see any damage. Then Carpenters, and as we all know, B.P.'s had windows smashed and yet Nina Street, the street which was used often by the crowds to surge away from Police attacks in front of Carpenter's store, they would run down that section of Robertson Road through Nina Street and come out near our premises again-they used it to get away-there was no evidence of damage in the shops along that place. In Cumming Street there was an attack on Mouat's Pharmacy, and in Waimanu Road, Corbett's Butchery, one of the few European shops there, was singled out although there was a shoe shop somewhere in the area that was Indian owned and was also damaged. Boots the Chemist seemed to be systematically smashed and what was not broken on the night of the 9th was taken care of on the morning of the 10th, and Steeles, a small shop on the corner of Pier Street was picked out also for stoning, but none of the shops of the other races in that block were touched. The next evidence was the British Council door and the Fiji Trading Company's windows broken by the crowds who were coming down on the 10th to hear the speeches at Albert Park. It was easy to see in Renwick Road that the crowds who systematically smashed the windows of Morris Hedstrom's new building's upstairs windows in particular, must have stood along the verandahs of all the Indian shops opposite to get an angle at which to throw their stones, and yet those shops were not touched."

Source: Report of Commission of Inquiry into the Disturbances in Suva, December 1959 (Council Paper No.10 of 1960), p.27

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